

**AN EXCELLENT
TREATISE OF CHRISTIAN
RIGHTEOVSNES, WRITTEN FIRST**
in the French tongue by *M. I. de l'Espine*, &
translated into English by *I. Feilde*, for the
comfort of afflicted consciences, very neces-
sarie and profitable to be read of all Christi-
ans, as well for establishing them in the true
doctrine of Iustification, as also for ena-
bling them to confute the false doctrine of
all Papistes and Heretickes in that point.



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trollier dwelling in the Blackfriars.

1578.

To the Reader.

Loe here the ioy of Christians all,
laid vp within this booke:
To teach the way that leades to life,
whereon ech man may looke.
It is not we, but it is he,
that freely giueth life:
That none but he, may praised be,
without caineſav or ſtrife.

TO THE VERTVOVS

AND MY VERY DEARE
FRIEND THE LADY ELIZABETH
Terwhit I. F. wisheth encrease of godlinesse, and
constancy in the true religion of Christ to the ende
and in the ende.

Right vvorshipfull, and my ve-
ry good Lady, after I had peru-
sed this litle treatise of Chri-
stian righteousnes, as it vvvas
first vvritten in the Frenche
tongue, I tooke great cōfort in it, & thought
it to be very necessarie, to be turned into
Englishe for the benefite of Christes poore
Church. I therefore as occasion serued at con-
uenient times, performed that I purposed,
vvherein I haue studied to be as simple and
plaine (because of the vnlearned) as possibly
the matter & phrased of that tongue vvould
suffer me. I am not ignoraunt vvhat an
hard thing it is to translate vvell, and con-
traryvvise, how easie a thing it is for eue-
ry carping Momus, or ignoraunt Zoilus to

finde fault: but herein I shall as God shall assist me, arme my selfe with patience to beare whatsoeuer hath ben, is, or shalbe layd upon me. This only shall comfort me, that I walke not before men, but before God: in whose presence I protest, that according to the simple knowledge he hath giuen me, I haue dealt simplie and sincerely. Of all vanities I esteeme it the greatest, to hange vpon the blastes of mens mouthes. They that are that waye caried highest, and haue not the testimony of good consciences, neither seeke to approue them selues to God, to whom they must stand or fall, they shall finde no comfort in it, in the day of death. It litle auaieth a man to be iustified of the whole worlde, and to be condemned before God. Therefore God giue vs grace to walke as in his presence, that whatsoeuer we take in hande, it may be consecrated to him, & haue an excellent blessing vpon it. I haue dedicated my labours herein, to your good Ladyshippe for sundry causes, though I deny not, but my meaning is to make them common to the church of God: first that they may be a testimonie to
all

all posterity of your forwardnes, fidelity and sinceritie in the religion of Christ Iesus: Then, of my bounden dutie and good will towarde you. And I most humbly beseeche you in the eyes and sight of the whole worlde, that you constantly and inuiolably holde and keepe that blessed hope of your best inheritance. And as God in mercy hath drawen you out of the sinke and mier of Poperie, and of the false worshippe of God (wherto, as to all other vices we are most apt by nature) to the true religion of Christ, so goe forwards, and most humbly and continually thanke him for it. Acknowledge it the greatest benefit that euer in mercy he could haue bestowed vpon you. Beware of the world, that maketh least accompt of this most excellent, and vvaightie thinge. Study by all meanes to answere this holy & excellent calling, that your religion maye shine as well in workes as in wordes, in an holy conuersation as in a sincere profession. Know assuredly that where the truth of God raigneth, there the kingdome of Satan decaieth, the strength of sinne abateth,

6 The Epistle Dedicatorie.

the pleasures of the flesh are restrained, and Iesus Christ by the scepter of his holy word & blessed spirit, continually worketh, to the dayly mortifying of the outward man, and quickening the inward, to the brideling & maistering of the affections of the mind: till it be renewed, reformed & chaunged into his holy obedience, and so by litle and litle be translated into his kingdome. And till this bee brought to passe, you shall neuer feelee what Christes righteousness is (which is our onely happines) wherof this booke so notably & comfortably entreateth. The Lorde Iesus open your harte, and giue you understanding in all his misteries, that you may see his great glorie, till you maye comprehendewith all Saincts the height, depth, vidth and length of his glorious righteousness, laying holde vpon it through a liuely faith, and so be sealed vpon through him (as I doubt not but you are) to euerlasting happines. Fare you well most humbly from my poore house in Grubstreet this second of Nouember. 1577.

Your good Ladiships bounden
in the Lorde. I F.

AN



AN EXCELLENT TREATISE, OF CHRI-

STIAN RIGHTEOUSNES,

Made by M. I. de l'Espine Minister

of the worde of God, and newly

put forth for the instruction

and consolation of the

children of God.



HERE is not any one article
in all our Christian Fayth, the
knowledge whereof can bee so
healthfull and necessarie vnto vs,
as this of Christian Righteous-
nesse. But soasmuch as vpon this righteous-
nesse dependes everlasting lyfe, and this righ-
teousnesse vppon Fayth, and of Fayth com-
meth that knowledge which we haue of the
promises of our God, and of Iesus Christ, who
is the onely meane, that they are applyed, and
freely accomplished towards vs, without ha-
uing any respect to any of our woorkes: It beho-
ueth for the better vnderstanding of all these
things aright, that we laye them soorth in or-
der, and begin with the definition of Christian

Abac. 2. 4.

Rom. 1. 17.

Rom. 3. 24.

Et 15.

2. Cor. 1. 28

*The definition of
the righteousness of
the Philosophers &
Schoolmen*

righteousnesse. But it must be noted that in the holy Scripture the signification and vse of this worde (Righteousnesse) is farre different from that which is vsed in the bookes of the Philosophers and schoolemen; because they take righteousnesse, for a certaine habite and qualitie, which being shutte vp in our soule, enclineth vs to liue honestly, and in such sorte to order the course of all our actions, that they be fully framed to reason, and to those rules that are sette forth vnto vs in the Lawe: A thing that we can not doe perfectly, seeing that we are loaden and compassed about with so great infirmitie, and for that our nature being so diseased and corrupted, it pricketh vs, and wholly turneth vs, from the loue, studie and exercise of that which is good: and contrariwise disposeth and prouoketh vs to embrace and followe vice, with a maruailous will and readinesse. Besides, wee are driuen and ledde in this case by many tentations and assaults, where-with the flesh, the worlde and deuill doe continually assaile vs. Wherefore wee must conclude, that in the whole worlde, there can neuer be founde a righteous man if righteousnesse be to be measured according to that definition, which the Philosophers haue giuen: and that it be established, in a perfection of
 vertue,

vertue, which we must moze loue, esteeme and honour, then any other good, and applie our whole spirite, and all our vnderstanding to attaine to it, and possesse it: without thinking at any time that this is any meane to make vs to be accompted righteous before **G D D**, in whose p[re]sence and iudgement all our workes shall euer be founde imperfect and damnable, *Iob. 4. 18. and. 9. 3. & 25. 4.* if they be examined acco[rd]ing to the rigour of **G** his righteousnes.

To vnderstande then what this Ch[ri]stian righteousnes is, and in what it consisteth, it is meete to note, that Righteousnes and iudgement are cor[re]latiues, and fo[er] the better vnderstanding of the one, it must be referred to the other. The which thing may easely be obserued in many places of the newe Testament, where righteousnesse is referred to iustification, and iustification to righteousnesse. In such sorte, that comparing these places one with an other, a man shall finde that righteousnes is no other thing but the meane whereby we are iustified before the iudgement seate of God. And that iustification is nothing else but a release of our sinnes which we obtaine there through the fauour, and in beholding the merite of Iesus Ch[ri]st, which there is imputed vnto vs, *Rom. 3. 4. 5. What righteousnes is. What iustificatio is.*

*Manye
kinds of
iudgements.*

But here it is to be noted, that there are many kinds of iudgements differing one from the other, that is to wit, there is the iudgement of God: the iudgement of the law: the iudgement of men, & of our owne conscience: and we must know whether our owne righteousnes be sufficient to satisfie & answere to euery one of these iudgements, and whether the same in any of these, can stande vs in steede to obtayne an acquitement and deliuerance of the accusations that are propounded by our enemies there against vs.

*The iudgement of
God.*

Concerning Gods iudgement which is the first of the foure, we must answere that it is impossible there, that we can defend vs, if we haue no other thing to bring forth and alleage but our own innocencie: forasmuch as our thoughts, our affections, our wordes, our actions, and generally our whole life and nature being examined, it shal be founde that in man is nothing els but vanitie, and to be shoyt the very matter of death and damnation, for howe can an euill tree bring forth any good fruite? and howe can rotten and wormeaten seede, engender any thing, but like it selfe? In like maner how can a man from a popsoned and infected vessell drawe one drop of good wine? let vs conclude then, that we neither doe, nor can doe any thing, that may be

*Psal. 39.6.
12.*

*Psal. 51.7.
& 62.10.*

*Similitudes
shewing the
corruption
of man, and
his unability
to doe
good.*

be able to abide that rigorous examination of the iustice of God, and that in vs and in our whole life there is nothing that can there warrant and deliuer vs but his mercie alone. Because we are as the Prophet sayth, a wilderness altogether ouergrown with bushes, bryambles, and bypers, which are good for nothing, but to be burnt, & a very dunghill of corruption where there is nothing (as S. Augustine sayth) but euen the very sincke and aboundance of miserie and filchines.

Osee. 2. 3.

In his booke of confessions. 2. chap. 10.

The beginning then of our righteousnes is, that we accuse and condemne our selues, & that we confesse before God that (which he knoweth wel enough) to wit that we are nothing but dust and corruption.

The beginning of our righteousnes is to know our unrighteousnes.

The prodigall childe withdrawing him selfe farre frō his fathers house, neuer thought that he could returne thether or attaine to righteousness & vertue, from which he was salne, but by the knowledge and feeling which he had of his faultes, and the sure perswasion which he had conceaued to confesse them.

The example of the prodigall childe.

Luc. 15. 18.

The Publican comming to the Temple laden and couered with vice and sinne, had remembrance of his vice and wretchednes, which he with great grieve and deepe gronings confessed: whereupon it came to passe that he re-

The second example of the Publican, Luc. 18 13. 14.

turned righteous into his owne house.

3. Example
of Dauid
and of Pe-
ter.

2. Sa. 12. 13

Luc. 22. 62.

After Dauid & holy Peter were turned away from God, through a great unkindnes and forgetfulness, as wel from him, as from those graces, which they had receaued of his large liberality, had they any other meane to be reconciled vnto him, but by the acknowledgement and confession of their sinnes? wherupon we must conclude, that by this we must approach before god. And that there is nothing that doth more allure and knit vs to him, then a penitent heart which (as S. Augustine saith) seeleth and continually bewaileth his sinnes and imperfections.

The acknowledgement of our miseries is the foundation of our religion.

A similitude shewing the good that commeth of humilitie.

1. Sa. 15. 17.

This humilitie is not onely the foundation of our righteousness (as Iohn Chrysostome sayth) but also of all our religion, the which decayeth as soone as we begin to conceaue any opinion of our selues or of our owne vertues. He (sayth S. Augustine) will not be any longer of the body, that refuseth to be humble, & to make himselfe litle with his head: for ordinarily as the valleyes are more abundaunt and bring forth more fruite then doe the mountaines, by reason that being more low, they receaue more commodiously all the dew and fatnes which falleth and descendeth from the hie billes: euen so it behoueth that we be more low and humble in our owne eyes, if we will, that God replenish vs

vs with his graces : the which maye finde no place in vs, if we presume any whit of our vertues. Which thing Iesus Christ sayth to those Scribes and Pharises, whom he sawe arrogant and presumptuous, and puffed vp with a vaine and false opinion, that they had conceaued of their owne righteousness : you iustifie your selues before men, saith he vnto them : but God knoweth your hartes within, before whom, they oftentimes are most abhominable, that are in greatest credit and reputation in the worlde.

Luc. 16. 15.

Wherefore when there is any question concerning righteousness, we must diligently take heede that we be not like those that are sicke of the dropsie, who by reason of the grossnesse of their bodies, seeme to be in good estate : notwithstanding they be full of nothing but water and such euil humors, which in the end are the cause of their death.

Pride is quite contrary to our health. A similitude.

Let not then that outward appearance which we may haue of any vertue beguile & deceaue vs, because that all the vertue, that we can prouide for our selues, can no more endure before God, then waxe before the fire. And as there needeth no more but one pinne or pricke to pearce a bladder, & to make all the wind therein inclosed, incontinently to come forth : euen so there needeth no more, but one very litle centa-

A similitude, shewing that all the perfection that man maye haue, is nothing els but imperfection before God

tion to pull the vizarde from hypocrites ; and to discouer them to euery man, who shall know, after that they shalbe sifted, that there was nothing but a colour and an imagination of all the reputation of righteousness & vertue, which they had gotten amongst men.

Let vs not make then any accompte of all the righteousness which can be in vs ; nor let vs not bring it to the iudgemēt of our God, to better our cause, or to winne there by lawe any thing for vs. Forasmuch as there was neuer any other cause of the ruine of the Jewes, nor any thing that ouerthrewe them, & made them frustrate of the hope they had to attaine to the righteousness which they pretended, but the onely presumptuous opinion they had conceained to be able to appeare there, through their owne righteousness,

Rom. 10. 3.

Nowe to the ende we fall not headlong into the like daunger and inconuenience, let vs acknowledge and feele in our selues, that we are not able to thinke one onely good thought, but let vs be resolved in this, that all our abilitie is from the alone grace and bountie of our God.

2. Cor. 3. 5.

For all our glory (as S. Paule sayth) is excluded, and we haue not any thing in our selues, whereof we may boast our selues.

Rom. 3. 27. and 5. 2.

For beinge naturally deade in sinne as we

we are, can we haue any good motion or feeling? But it is certaine that befoze our regeneration, and befoze we be called thzough the grace of God to the knowledge of him: we are blinde and can not see any whitte of the misteries and secretes of God. Moreover, we are deaffe and can not heare his voyce: we are sicke of the palsey and impotence, and not able to walke in his wayes: we haue an hart of stone, which bzingeth foozth no good affection: and a mouth full of bitternes and curssing, and we are as an open graue, from whence commeth nothing but stench and corruption: to conclude, we are altogether dead, depzied of all good, in such sort, that we haue not any good vse of our reason. Let no man flatter him selfe (sayeth S. Augustine) sozasmuch as we are nothing of our selues but deuills & Sathans: that is to saye, of our owne nature, we are enemies of God, of his honour, of his lawe, and of all vertue: and there is not any other difference betwixt vs and Deuills, but the onely pitie, which God hath vnto vs, & the gracious fauour which it pleased him to shewe vnto vs. And although God hath accepted of vs, & that being receaued into his couenaunt, we are cōsecrated vnto him to be his temple: notwithstanding all these great & incomprehenible fauours which

*Arguments
to proue the
corruption
& vnrigh-
teousnes of
man before
God.*

*1. Cor. 2. 14.
Deut. 14. 4.
Ezec. 11. 12.
19. & 36.
26.*

Rom. 3. 13.

*Augustine
vpon Iohn.*

he hath shewed vs, we ought not vtterly to abolish the remembrance which we ought alwayes to haue of our horrible corruption. The Scripture to the end to beate downe our presumption, and to keepe vs mindefull of the corruption of our nature, putteth vs continually in remembrance, that we and all flesh are nothing but grasse, wormes meate, dust, and filth, as Dauid sayeth that God knoweth vs, and whereof we are made: and that to be briefe, we are nothing but dust and putrefaction: yea that the greatest and goodliest of the whole worlde with all their commoditie and beautie, which men so much esteeme, are nothing but vanitie: and that if they were put into the ballaunce to be wayed with nothing, nothing would be found heauier then they. Being then so noted in the Scripture, yea when we are so adozned and enriched with the great and precious giftes of our God: in what estimation shall we haue righteousness and vertues whereof we thinke to haue so great plentie?

A similitude to shew the hypocrisie and miserie of man.

We do as marchaunts, who alwayes prayse and esteeme their wares & marchandise more then they are worth: euen so doe we of our vertues: but when they are examined and prised by those which know them, as by the spirit of God and his Prophets, they are altogether iudged,

as

as old ragges, torne, tyed together & patched vp
 againe: & as old images new gilded ouer, which
 outwardly haue some glistering and shewe, but
 within are nothing but dust & durt: or, as counter-
 faite money, which is of ill mettall howe goodly
 a printe soeuer it haue. All our righteousnesses
 saith Esay are as olde ragges, foule and loth-
 some to see. S. Paule albeit he walked in the
 lawe, without rebuke, and that he felt himselte
 not culpable in any thing in his conscience nor
 willingly to haue transgressed: yet notwith-
 standing hee esteemeth his righteousnesse as
 dongue. Daniel praying vnto God, alleageth
 not his owne righteousness & vertues, neither
 the righteousness and vertues of his compaigni-
 ons, to the ende to cause God to encline, and to
 heare his prayers. Now (saith he) that we are
 befoze thy face, we can set nothing befoze thee,
 nor propounde any thing on our part but shame
 and confusion. Cursed (sayth Augustine) be all
 our righteousnesses, if they be iudged without
 the mercie of God. And Tertullian: All the
 good that we doe (sayth he) and all the righte-
 ousnesse and vertue which is in vs, is nothinge
 but shame and reproch.

*Testimo-
 nies of the
 Scriptures,
 & Fathers
 to proue
 the vn-
 righteous-
 nesse of
 man before
 God.
 Philip. 3. 8.
 Dan. 9. 1.*

Augustine.

Tertullia.

When they spake these thinges, it was not
 without great reason, because there is no righ-
 teousnes and vertue in vs, which is not defiled

and polluted with great vices. Also, there is not any sayth, which is not mingled with an infinite number of doubtles, errours and sonde imaginations: nor likewise, any godlines which is not contaminate with innumerable scruples and superstitious. To conclude: all our wine (as Esay sayeth) is mingled with water, and all our cozne is full of darnel and durt.

Esay. 1. 22.

These similitudes and other following, shewe the beastly pride of them, that thinke to haue in the selues wherewith all to stand before God
Iere. 9. 23.

Howe if a man woulde boast of his strength and health, and yet were subiect to a thousande diseases: or of his knowledge, and yet were ignorant of all good learning: or of his riches, and yet were indebted and endaungered to the whole worlde: woulde not euery one mocke him as an idiote and a foole? euen so we aswell shewe our ignorance, and what slender vnderstanding we haue, when wee will attribute any righteousness to our selues, and boast our selues in it, be it neuer so litle.

He that is strong (sayth Ieremie) let him not boaste and presume of his strength, nor he that is wise of his wisdom, nor he that is rich of his riches, because that, if we consider what we haue on the one side, we must marke what wee lacke on the other. And when all shalbe well caste, it shall bee founde that the expence will farre surmounte the receipt, and the debtes are much greater, then the reuenuue. Moreover,
all

all that is greatest vnder the Sunne, and that which men most wonder at and worship in the worlde, is nothing else (as Solomon sayeth) *Eccle. 4. 2. and 1. 1.* but vanitie. Is there any thing so stable and durable, which is not mutable, transitorie, and vncertaine? what madnes then is it to make so great a matter and so highly to esteeme of our selues, for thinges of so small valewe? we are oftentimes like to those that dreame and wake againe, who when they are a sleepe thinke to haue founde some great treasure, and haue a great ioye in it: but after their wakening, they see that all is banished like smoke, whereupon they bere a grieue them selues. Likewise when wee thinke that wee are righteous, this is a dreame, which passeth through our spirits and banisheth as soone as we are awake and are deliuered from the darkenes of ignorance, wherein we were a sleepe and buried. S. Paule whilst he was ignorant, without a true and right knowledge of y^e lawe, thought to be righteous, and felt not sinne any whitte raigning in him, *An example in Paul before his conuersion.* vntill that God by his grace, had illuminated him, & made his will by the lawe known vnto him, & so consequently the lustes, & corruption y^e was in his nature. The which made him soone enough to forgoe the opinion which he had conceived of his owne righteousness and vertues.

B it.

*An other
similitude.*

After that wee haue well swept our chambers, it seemeth vnto vs þ̄ they are very cleane: And yet notwithstanding, when the sunne cometh, to enter there by the windowes, we perceauē streightwayes by the beames an infinite deale of dust, which þ̄ Philosophers call mores: euen so oftentimes befoze we be wel instructed in þ̄ lawe of God, if we be exempted from grosse & palpable sinnes, such as are murders, whoredomes, thestes, we glozie that we are perfect and innocent. But when our consciences come to be discried hy the worde of God, & that Iesus Christ who is the light hath entred there by his spirite: then he maketh vs to see by his beames an infinite number of faultes and imperfections, which are hidden in our heartes, as are the serpents in their holes. Saint Paule sayth that he neuer vnderstoode, that concupiscence was a vice, vntil he had seene in the lawe, that it was there forbidden. Yea, but hadde he not learned this in the schoole of Gamaliel, befoze his conuersion? I graunt, as concerning the outward barke and superficially. But he hadde not attained yet to the bottome, the which wee can not doe, vntil we haue bene in the schoole of Iesus Christ, whoe in the lawe will make vs truely to knowe both God and our selues, euen as the sunne shining by his bryghtnes maketh vs to see
it

it selfe, and all thinges with it.

In the nyght by reason of the darkenesse *An other*
 spread vppon the earth : all thinges are hidde *similitude.*
 and couered : which causeth that we can not dis-
 cerne and discouer the spottes which we haue
 in our faces : But when the light beginneth to
 appeare, and that we take a glasse, to beholde
 our selues therein : then they are discouered and
 shewe them selues : euen so likewise during the
 time that we are couered with the darkenesse of
 ignozaunce, the vices that dwell in vs, are hid-
 den there, and oftentimes wee thinke, being
 leyzous and desozined, that wee are beautifull
 and perfect : but our eyes being open, and illu-
 minate by the spirite and grace of our God, and
 taking the glasse of the lawe, therein to beholde
 the estate of our nature and our lyfe : then wee
 begin to knowe the great and greuous imper-
 fections that are in vs : and we attonce loose the
 opinion which we had conceaued befoze, of our
 owne righteousness and vertues.

We are oftentimes lyke vnto drunkardes *An other*
 who being ouercharged with wine and meate, *similitude.*
 haue no maner of knowledge or feeling of the
 case wherein they are, nor of any thing else, and
 yet hauing their face couered, and all to be-
 rayed with durt, they canne not perceauie it
 vntill that their wine be dzenched, and their

braine deliuered from those fumes and vapours whereby they were so letted, and darkened. We likewise, before we be regenerate, are in such a sorte besotted with a loue that we beare to our selues, and with a vaine opinion that wee haue conceaued of our selues, that we know not the filthinesse and villanies wherewith we are berayed. But when the light of the spirite and worde of God beginnes to breake forth vnto vs, we come by litle and litle to breake and scatter those cloudes, which were before our senses, and recouering the viewe of our reason, we beginne to awake our selues, and discover the pitifull and miserable estate wherein we are. And looke as this knowledge groweth and encreaseth in vs, so much the more it augmenteth and encreaseth the knowledge of our vices and imperfections. As wee may see by experience in the fathers, who though they were notable and excellent personages, and marked with all notable vertues: yet notwithstanding they made no accompt of them: but contrariwise they confessed that they were the greatest sinners in the worlde, as a man may see by those goodly confessions whiche the scripture mentioneth, to haue ben made of Abrahah, Isaac, Iacob, Dauid, Ieremie, Daniell, S. Paule, S. Iohn, and generally of the whole Church: by which
we

*The Patriarches,
Prophetes
and Apostles: in
whom they
sought
their righteousnesses.*

we woulde iudge them to haue bene the moſte wicked men, which were vpon the earth, if we knew not the humilitie, that was in them, and in what contempt they hadde them ſelues and their workes, for the great knowledge they had of the lawe of God: the which engendred in them an other thing, to wicte, the knowledge of the imperfection which was in them and in their lyfe, when they came to meaſure it according to the rule of the lawe, and brought al their thoughtes, deſires, wordes, and actions, to be tryed by the will and ordinaunce of God.

We ſaye in a common prouerbe, that ſuch a one as thinketh him ſelfe in beſt health, caryeth death in his boſome. Which muſt not onely be vnderſtoode of the bodely health, but alſo of the health of the ſoule. For the diſeaſes of the body are nothing ſo daungerous, as thoſe of the ſoule: becauſe that verie many (albeit their hartes are full of diſtruſtes, doubtinges, errors, falſe opinions, ingraticudes, enuies, reuengements, darkenes, ignoraunce, and other deadly diſeaſes) neuertheleſſe they thinke them ſelues in very good health, and that their righteousneſſe is ſufficient to enable them, to aunſwere and ſatiſſie the iudgement of God. As that proude Pharifie, who in ſteade of humbling him ſelfe before God and confeſſing his faultes

A ſimilitude taken of a common prouerbe.

Luc. 8. 11.

Mat. 19.

20.

Iere. 2. 23.

to him setteth forth and extolleth his owne
 woꝝkes in his prayer. And the Scribe that
 bragged, that he had accomplished the whole
 law; and the Synagogue, that boasted her selfe
 of her owne innocencie, and in that, that she had
 not sinned. Wherefoꝛe God caused complaint to
 be made against her, to conuince her of hipocri-
 sie, and of the sinnes that shee hadde foꝛgotten,
 thꝛough negligence, and of the loue, that she
 ought to haue boꝛne vnto him.

Although then that God doe it not alwayes
 discouer our faulces wholly vnto vs, he will not
 therfoꝛe that we make light of them: but if we
 doe, he streightwayes calleth vs to a reckning,
 and requireth them of vs, and constraineth vs
 to confesse them vnto him, that he may foꝛgiue
 vs: to the ende, that we maye haue occasion
 hereby, to acknowledge and set forth his great
 liberalitie. And this is all that he requireth and
 demaundeth of vs foꝛ hauing acquitted and dis-
 charged vs of such a great and notable summe,
 wherein we were indebted to him. Foꝛ looke
 howe muche soeuer of the gloꝛie of anye righ-
 teousnesse and vertue we attribute to our sel-
 ues, so muche wee diminishe of the bountie
 and liberalitie of our God, and wee pꝛouoke
 him to ielousie, because we beare him not that
 loue, noꝛ reuerence, that wee owe vnto him,
 but

but doe moze loue our owne honour then his. And euen like as a husbände louing his wyfe tenderly, (to make his affection knopen vnto her, bestowing vpon her many great presentes of golde and costly Jewelles,) is verie heauie if she dissemble the giftes which he hath bestowed vpon her, and say shee hath purchased them by her owne mony: Euen so God can in no wise be pleased with vs, if we wil conceale oꝝ els attribute to our selues, the graces which he hath bestowed vpon vs, which he woulde haue to bee testimonies, tokens and demonstrations of the inuiolable loue and fidelitie that he beareth vnto vs.

A similitude.

Moses sayde vnto the people of Israel, whilst they were yet in the wildernes: When thou shalt come into the lande which God hath promised to thy fathers, and shalt haue taken possession thereof, and peaceably enioye the fructes and delicate thinges that it shall bring forth vnto thee. Take good heede that thou say not, that thy strength and righteousnes hath gotten all this: but acknowledge that God, by his onely goodnes and loue which he beareth vnto thee, hath shewed these great benefites and fauours to thee, without hauing any respect of thee, who wast a rebellious and idolatrous people, noꝝ to thy workes, which were altogether

Deu. 3. and 9.

vicious and faultie: euen so if God hath once brought vs into his Church, let vs beware that we saye nōt that we haue merited or gotten the graces that bee there communicated vnto vs, by our owne industrie: but let vs continually confesse our pouertie and vnworthynesse, and acknowledge with the Apostle, that in that wee are vertuous, we are so, by the meane of his onely goodnes: and then without all comparison we shalbe richer & happyer, then we shoulde be, if we woulde be so, by our owne meane and by our owne strength: muche more I say by the liberalitie of our good God, who is much richer and more aboundant to geue vnto vs, then our owne strength and force can purchase, or heape vpon vs. And wee must perswade our selues that God can doe vs more good in one moment, then wee knowe howe to desire or to compasse by our trauell or diligence, in tenne millions of yeares.

*Simili-
tudes shew-
ing that
we haue
neede to be
iustified by
the onely
grace of
God.*

What cause then is there, that wee shoulde not desire and labour to bee more ryghteous by the grace of our God, then by our owne vertue? A man shalbe a great deale more healthfull that will be thzoughly gouerned by the regiment & counsell of some good and expert phisitions, then he that will be lead altogether by his owne appetite. A beast is a great deale better gouerned

uerued by man, then it can bee by it selfe. A
 feilde, a vine, a tree, are in muche better case,
 being tilled, cutte and pruned by labourers and
 husbandmen, then if they were leste to them
 selues. Bodies also being alone, and without
 any lyfe, are blockes, but hauing the soule and
 lyfe in them, they are applyed and vsed to an
 infinite number of goodly and excellent actions:
 Whereby a man maye easelye perceauie, that
 the inferiour natures, to the ende they may bee
 well gouerned and ruled, haue neede of the go-
 uernement & guiding of the superiour. Whence
 commeth it then, that in the matter of righte-
 ousnesse, wee thinke that our reason and will
 haue moze might, then the grace of our God?

There are certaine vaine gloriovs beastes,
 which bragge that they haue gotten that which
 they knowe, by their owne onely diligence, and
 without the helpe of any other maister and tea-
 cher: and that they are no further bounde, for
 the good they knowe, then to their owne labour
 and trauell. And also there be some others yet
 moze proude and arrogant, who thinke them
 selues with power sufficiently enabled, to get
 all vertues by their owne naturall faculties:
 as Pelagius and all his secte, who canne not
 better shewe their arrogancie and ignorance,
 then in thus pleasing them selues, in them

*Pelagius
 & his sect.*

selues, and hauing in suche estimation and admiration, the naturall force and power, which they falsly attribute to them selues. The which is an euident signe, that they neuer knewe them selues nor the strength of their owne shoulders, in baunting so of the weaknes and pouertie that is in them.

But for our partes, if we desire to be cladde with a righteousnes, which is able to stande before the face of God, and to appeare with assurance in his iudgement, let vs not seeke it in our selues, but let vs seeke it, and finde it, in the onely grace and mercie of our God. For (as S. Augustine sayeth) there is nothing within vs, that can please and content him, but onely that, which hee hath put in vs of his owne goodnesse.

Let vs not then followe these proude spiritues, which delight and content them selues in nothing but in their owne workes, & through a doting imagination accompting and esteeming them goodly and perfect, euen as Apes doe their young ones: but contrariwise, let all that is in vs, and al that we doe, displease vs, and let vs bee the first iudges to condemne our selues and our workes, forasmuch as the meane to come to righteousnes, is to bee able to approche with confidence, to the throne and iudgement

ment seate of our God, and continually to lye
with the holy Apostle: I knowe that I am carnall and soule vnder sinne: by meanes whereof I can in no wise approue that which I doe. For I doe the euill which displeaseth me, and can not doe the good I loue and desyre to doe, certainly there is not in me, (that is to saye in my fleshe) any good thing. I see and feelee continually in my members a lawe which fighteth against the lawe of my minde, and leadeb me captiue to the lawe of sinne which is in my members.

Howe this confession ought througely to beate downe the pride and arrogancie of those presumptuous ones, and stop vp the mouthes of all those that will be iustified by their owne workes and vertues. For it commeth from a vessel and instrument which God by speciall fauour had chosen from among all y men of the world, and who euen in those times of his ignoraunce liued in such sort according to the righteousness of the lawe, that hee was blamelesse and vnrebukeable towards men. What a one then might he be being regenerated, taken vp into the third heauen, where he had heard secretes, which it was not lawfull for him to vtter, & who had so greatly trauelled in the worke of the Lorde to plant and to water his Church,

Rom. 7.14.

A notable consideration vpon that Pauls confesseth him selfe a miserable sinner
2. Cor. 12.1
1. Cor. 3.6
Gala. 2.6.
2. Cor. 11.9
23.

that therein he passed and farre out went all his compaignions. And to conclude, hee gaue place to none of them, neither in knowledge, nor in zeale, nor in high, and diuine meditations, nor in diligence, nor in vertues, nor in any other thing which was agreeable to his vocation, for his good and vpright walking therein. If then suche a person did in such sorte and so muche humble him selfe, what ought we to doe after him?

*An other
example of
the humili-
tie of Isaie,
the excel-
lent seruant
of God.
Isaie. 6.6.*

Isaie. 46.8.

I saie, whose mouth and tongue was cleansed by one of the Cherubins, and was sent from before the face of God for this purpose: who also had exercised his ministerie in the Church of God the space of thre score yeares and more, and without ceasing day and night, was as a good watchman vpon the wall to discover the comming of the enemies, to the ende that both him selfe, and those ouer whome he hadde charge might not be ouertaken through negligence: what sayth he of him selfe? and in what place and degree doth he put him selfe? Thou art (sayth he to God) our Creatour, and wee are nothing but earth and dust. All our righteousness is as filthie cloutes, and we are all faded as a lease, and our iniquities haue carped vs as the winde: there is none that calleth vpon thy name, nor that stirreth vp him selfe to laie holde

holde vppon thee: for thou hast hidde thy face from vs, and hast consumed vs because of our iniquities. Dought not this confession to make all the glorie and righteousnes of these proude hypocrites, to blushe for shame? Certainely the perfection which those imagine, deserueth not to be compared to the imperfection of those excellent seruantes of God, nor their phantasticall riches and aboundance to their pouertie. For as much as the basest golde, though it be rayed with some dirte, is alwayes more precious then the brightest lead that a man can finde. Euen so the righteousnesse of a Christian man, though it be defiled throught many infirmities and imperfections, yet notwithstanding is more to be esteemed then all the righteousnes of hypocrites and infidelles.

*A simile
ende a-
gainst the
righteous-
nesse of hi-
pocrites.*

There is nothing better, then for a man to humble him selfe before God. Humilitie was the cause that the Caaniticke who was otherwise a dogge, became a faythfull woman, and that her fayth was preferred, before the fayth of all the people of God. Because there is no better meane, to lift vs vp, then to humble our selues: to be wyle, then to repute our selues fooles: to be strong, then to feeble our owne debilitie and weakenes. And this S. Augustin confirming, sayeth, that all our strength is in hu-

*The fruite
of Christiā
humilitie.*

A similitude of the proude and of the humble.

milittie, and that there is nothing moze weake and fraile then pride and presumption. Forasmuch as all proude persons staye them selues vpon their owne strength, that is, stay vpon a reede and vpon the ice of one nights fresling: and are like vnto smoke that mounteth by on high, and so in going by is scattered and commeth to nothing. But the humble man is as a rocke or a square bodie, which is alwayes stayed on which side soeuer it be turned, and there is no man (as sayth that same good father) so harde to be healed, as he that thinketh him selfe to be hoale: forasmuch as he alwayes refuseth counsell of the Physicion, and will take no remedies, nor keepe any good dyet or gouernment of him selfe, which should be meete and healthfull for him. Euen so likewise there is no man farther of from the righteousnesse of God, then he that hath some good opinion of him selfe. For such commonly are obstinate, and can not without great difficultie, be brought from the persuasion, which they haue conceaued of their owne righteousnes.

Presumption very dangerous.

There is then no greater presumption nor moze daungerous in the worlde, then this. For whosoever presumeth so of his owne strength & vertue, and that he can of him selfe become wise, he maketh him selfe equal with God. For there is

is none but God, which is of him selfe, and by nature wyse, ryghteous, blessed and perfect. Men are not otherwise wyse, then by learning and instruction: nor ryghteous, but by grace: nor happie, but by the fruition and participation of the soueraigne good: If then a man will depende vpon him selfe, and establishe in him selfe the foundations of felicitie and happines, presuming that through the light & quicknesse of his owne spirite, he can obtaine wysedome, and by the power of his owne will, righteousness, and by the contentation and delight which he hath of his owne vertues and actions, perfect felicitie: certainly this man esteemeth him selfe to be lyke vnto God. But those persons that haue such an opinion, & presume so much of them selues, they are founde in the ende to come too short of their accompt: because it cometh to passe with them as it did to our forefathers, who when they acknowledged not the honour which God had bestowed vpon them, but went about to lift vp them selues in an higher degree then he had sette them, they fell attonce headlong, and became like vnto brute beastes: which thing happened to Nebucadnezar, who beinge become drunken and besides him selfe through the great victories and prosperities that he had gotten, thought to mounte vpon to

Nebucad-
nezar pu-
nished for
his pride.
Dan. 4. 22.

heaven and to make him selfe equall with God: but
 contrary to his expectation, to beate downe
 and breake the idle thoughtes and discourses of
 his harte (no other wise then happened to them
 that builded the Tower of Babel) God hauing
 attonce discharged him of his aucthoritie, dig-
 nitie and mighte, togeather with the loue,
 obedience, feare, and fidelitie of his subiectes,
 friends and seruants, in the end hauing made
 him lyke to wilde beastes, with whom he liued,
 and did eate, and drinke, as though they had
 bene his familiars and companions: he was
 taught by experience what it was, and the dan-
 ger thereof for an earthly man to seeke to exalt
 him selfe, and to take vpon him to be haile fellow
 with God: forasmuch as he is gealous of his
 glorie, and can not at any hande abide that his
 glorie shoulde be abased or diminished, without
 being kindled & prouoked to reuenge himselfe
 vpon all those whom he findeth guiltie of any
 suche audacitie and rashenes. He woulde shewe
 vs that we are bounde vnto God for all the
 good thinges we haue, and that we owe vnto
 him therein faith and homage, and principally
 for those spirituall giftes of our goodnes and
 felicitie: so as he will be accompted and confes-
 sed to bee the chiefe cause and thauthour of
 that we are, afterwarde for this that we are
 good,

Exod. 20.5

good, and to conclude for that we are blessed:
 and when so euer we will attribute any of these
 of three thinges vnto our selues, or else referre
 them that vnto any other then to him, he can not a-
 void it.

Alexander the Great hearing the rehearfall
 of the great victories and Conquestes which
 Philippe his father hadde gotten and made,
 was grieved, for that his father hauinge so
 brought into subiection the whole countrey and
 had briedled his enemies on euery side, had already
 taken from him all hope of doing any honora-
 ble or glorious thing. As he had borne himsele
 in hande he woulde doe, it so faulling out that
 matter and occasion to imploye him selfe, and
 his power fayled him not. For this is the pro-
 pertie of all valiant and noble Princes, to bee
 agrieved when they loose oportunitie to make
 them selues esteemed and to winne honour and
 renowne by their prowesse, and that they are
 constrained to rest them selues and be idle at
 home in their house, as mitching cowardes and
 dastardes. In so much as there is nothing that
 they are moze greedie of, then the glorie and
 immortalitie of their names. Is it then any
 maruell if God who is altogether perfect, and
 in whom a man can not reprobende any thing,
 or desire any thing, shoulde in such sort loue his

*Alexander
 the Great
 an image of
 all ambi-
 tious princes.*

glozy? feeling that sinnefull men are so desirous of theirs, if once they thinke to haue any thing in them that is commendable. But as concerning vs, we maye not suffer our selues to be banquished or ouermastred of any suche passion, which (as S. Augustine sayeth) is the worst guide, and most dangerous counsaillour, that wee canne choose, to rule and gouerne our actions by. And it is impossible but that wee shoulde obeye this passion, when once we are submitted vnto it, and become the slaues thereof.

Wherefore that we may goe safely, we must be mainteined in a simple humilitie, not lifting vp our hartes to hie, but in suche wise taming our appetites, that we be like to litle childezen that come from the nurse. They that goe the playne waye, are not in so great daunger to fal as they which goe vpon the ridge of houses, or vpon the coppe of some high mountayne: Euen so they that will be modest and haue no opinion of them selues, they goe a great deale more safely and surely, then they which haue a bigge heart and losite lookes. For the waye that leadeth to lyfe is straight. And so is the gate whereby a man must enter there. Wherefore if we will passe thereat, we must not be so bigge and puffed vp with an opinion of our selues:

A similitude shewing the fruite of humilitie.

selues: but we must be leane and spare, and we must not esteeme moze of our selues then wee are worth.

Philo the Jewe writeth that the cause why leauen was forbidden the Jewes, at the feast of the Pascheouer was, to giue them to vnderstand that by this prohibition, they had to keepe the selues from the daunger of pride and presumption, into which they doe easely slide and fall, which haue any opinion of them selues, puffing vp them selues thereby as the dough is with the leauen. Wherefore it is very requisite that wee take good heede, in all our workes, to followe that counsell which our Sauour Christ giueth touching our almes: to witte, that our left hand know not what our right hand doeth. He would teach thereby, that we ought to be so vertuous, that our vertue be knownen to all the worlde, to the ende to edifie them which shall see it and knowe it: but of our selues it must not bee knownen, for feare that we knowing it, it engender some presumption in vs, which might corrupt that foresayde vertue: lyke as the leauen sowzeth the dough wherein it is mingled. But this ambition, as it is masked and disguised, so it knoweth very well howe to dissemble, and to flatter our appetites: so as wee can hardly take heede to our selues, yea though

An. allegorie of the leauen forbidden to the Jewes.

we studie the best we can, to be humble: ~~for~~ as much as it stealeth vnwares vpon vs, and shroudeth it selfe secretly within our hearte, within which oftentimes it is founde or euer we wist that it was entred. And this is the reason why S. Augustine sayeth, that all other sinnes are to be feared and fled indifferently of all persons: but the most perfect, and the best exercised and experienced in vertue ought principally to take heede of this rocke. For, as wormes engender sooner in soft and tender wood, then in other that is more hard & knottie: and likewise as mothes doe breed sooner in fine woll, then in coarse flockes: euen so ambition sooner assauleth an excellent and rare man in all kinde of vertue, then an other which is not so vertuous.

*A simile
made against
ambition.*

Psal. 30. 7.

It is therefore very needefull that we take good heede that we be not sleepe, neither become slothfull, as it happened sometimes vnto Dauid, as him selfe confesseth, sayinge when I was in prosperitie I thought I shoulde neuer be shaken: The Lord hauing in such sorte established me & vnderpropped me by his grace, so as I assured my selfe to be firme as the rocke: but as soone as he had turned away his countenance & withdrawen his spirit from me, I was found on the earth, and I beganne to know and feele my

my feeblenes and infirmities. It is comenient
therefore that we be vigilant to consider well
all the meanes; and prevent all those wayes by
which we maye be taken and deceaued. There
be some which are lyke to those that rugge at
the Dare in a Galley. A man woulde iudge
seeing their manner of dringe and howe they
streach their armes forwarde, that they woulde
goe on and sayle forth right: when with all
their might they enforce them selues to drawe
backewardes: euen so being baine glorious,
they will neuerthelesse perswade, that they haue
nothing in greater detestatiō then baine glorie:
when there is not any thing whereof they are
more desirous and greedie. Such in times past
were the Pharises as are yet at this daye the
Priests and Monkes of the Papacie, who haue
theit heartes swolne and puffed up with ambi-
tion: which they cloke and colour vnder the
bizarde and outwarde shew of humilitie. These
maye be resembled to Anisthenes, who on a
time walked in the common place at Athens,
with a cloke all to torne and cottred, to the end
that euery one beholding him so apparailled,
might iudge that he did it through humilitie,
and not for lacke of goods because he was a
man well esteemed and of good reputation. But
Socrates hauing discovered by the readynes

*A simili-
tude a-
gainst am-
bitious hy-
pocrites.*

*To whom
hypocrites
may be re-
sembled.*

*Anisthe-
nes noted
of hipocrisy
by Socrates*

and ripenes of his good understanding & iudgement the hipocrisie of this philosopher, sayd all a loude, that he sawe his ambition, though the hoales of his cloke. Diogenes also entring on a time into Plato his chamber, and seeing his bed very finely made (because being of a ciuile and gentleman like nature, he was note in his moueables apparell, and gestures, and to be short in all his conuersation) he went and wallowed him selfe like a swine vpon it, saying that he trampled downe Platons pryde: but Plato answered readely, that this was done with a greater pryde: whereby it maye appeare that there are many couñterfaite humilities, seruing for no other purpose but to abuse the simple, who can not beware of them.

Plato noted of pride by Diogenes, whom likewise he reproued for that offence.

Humilitie in wordes.

There be of them others, who hauing a certaine verball humilitie in mouth onely, saye they presume not any thing of themselves, and that they woulde they were as cleane from other sinnes as from that of ambition. And yet a man maye easely knowe by their fetches, the great desire and greedines that they haue of honours, seeking all the wayes they can, to compassse them, and piteously tormentinge themselves, when they see they are frustrat of them. Adde hereunto, that they desire to be flattered, and are neuer so well contente as when they heare

heare them selues extolled ; and their owne
 praises set out : contrariwyle neuer so displea-
 sed ; as when they see men hushie and saye no-
 thing praiseworthy of them : or any manner of
 waye to obscure them : Wherein they discouer
 their notable hypocrisie , and shewe evidently,
 that they are lyers , and accuse and condemne
 them selues : when they confesse that they are
 tainted with other sinnes, and yet will be free
 from this of ambition . For (as S. James *James. 2.*
 sayeth:) He that sinneth in one point of the law, *10.*
 he is gilty of all. Which thing euery one may
 acknowledge in him selfe ; if he will well exa-
 mine the boltsome, and secrets of his owne con-
 science, and consider by peecemeale all the cir-
 cumstaunces of euery sinne. For as among the
 vertues there is such a chayne as entertaineth
 and embzaseth eache other, (as men that are in
 a round, or that hold one an other by the hand)
 euen so among vices there is such a conspiratiō
 as lightly they are neuer sundzed one from the
 other. Therupon we must thinke that we can
 not be gilty of any one vice ; but we must also in
 like manner be gilty of all the other.

These then be not those humilities, (being
 counterfainte and bastardlyke) that it becom-
 meth vs to bying to the iudgement of God, to
 defende vs : forasmuche (as David sayeth) that

Gregorie
the diuine.

the cause of all reprobates shall there be quite ouerthrowen, and all their actions condemned, being straunge from God. But the true humilitie which God requireth, and which is necessarie, for to make vs appeare with confidence before his face, is a true knowledge which we ought to haue of our selues, and which engendreth in vs a true feeling of our vices and imperfections, and causeth vs to bewaile and lament, to accuse and confesse them before God: and maketh vs alwayes ashamed and confounded before his maiestie: in suche sort that when we appeare before him, we dare no more lifte vp our eyes to heauen, then that publicane: but looking downe to the earth we sape with him: **Lozde be mercifull to me poore and wretched sinner: and with Dauid: wash me O Lord from my iniquitie, & cleanse me from all my sinnes.** Also as he sapeth else where: **Enter not into iudgement with thy seruant: For no man liuing shalbe iustified in thy presence: and with Daniel: O Lord, to thee belongeth righteousness, and to vs shame and confusion: for we haue sinned, we haue committed iniquity we haue bene wicked and rebellious, and haue alwayes bene contrarie to thy commaundementes and iudgements.** With suche an humilitie and confessiong we

may

maye at all houres present our selues before
 God, and bee assured that he will not reiect vs
 from his presence: because (as *David* sayeth) *Psa. 51. 19.*
 hee neither despiseth nor reiecteth sorrowfull
 soules, hartes that are humbled and cast downe,
 and penitent spirits. *Isa. 66. 2.* *Isai. 66. 2.*
 That sayth: vpon whom
 shall the spirite of the Lorde rest, but vpon the
 humble, and vpon him that trembleth at his
 worde? *S. Augustine* sayeth: that men ioyne *S. Augustin*
 them selues and seeke out such as are their e-
 quales, and may matche them in greatnesse, of
 gnicie and riches: but contrariwise God who
 is the soueraigne in maiestie and highnesse, he
 ioyneeth him selfe to none, but to those that are
 humble and lowly in their owne sight. *Like will to his like.*

Let vs conclude then that there is nothing
 so necessaris and expedient, as to humble and
 throw downe our selues, as hath bene said, *The cōclu- sion touching*
 see that reedes and young oylers, which bowe *Christiā he*
 and peld to the winde, abide stable for the time *milisie.*
 of the tempest: where as the great trees that *A simili- tude.*
 seeme to be so strong and so well rooted, can not
 resist the violence and force of a great winde,
 so as many times they are blown downe, thi-
 ueted and rooted vp by the rootes: euen so there
 is none lost, condemned, destroyed and ouer-
 throwen in the iudgement of God: but he that
 will be there compted good, and will defende

*Simili-
tudes shew-
ing what
the thoghts
of the
faythfull
ought to be
when they
present the-
selues be-
fore God.*

himselfe therewith the vertue & strength of his
owne righteousness. For this is as a great thun-
der, that neuer putteth forth his might but a-
gainst thinges of resistance: but against any
beape of earth, or against a wolke packe, or
some such other flexible & yeelding substance,
the blow is broken and it streightwayes dyeth.
It is a great reproch and shame amongst men
for a man to breake and become bankrupte for
worldly goods: but before God it is a great glo-
rie and honour, and we know not how to do any
thing more profitable and honourable for vs,
then (as a man woulde saye) to laye the keyes
vnder the doore, and to forsake all, confessing
that we haue no meane to paye, & to discharge
our selues towardes his righteousness. We had
need in this case to be lyke couetous men, who
alwayes thinke that they are poore, how great
substaunce soeuer they haue, because they haue
more regard to that they desire, then to that they
haue. Whereouer, they thinke alwayes (as the
Poete sayeth) that their neighbours vineyarde
& fielde is goodlier & more fruiteful then theirs.
We in like maner considering both our selues,
and the whole estate of our lyfe, shall finde that
that which is maymed and wanting in vs, is
more then that which eyther we haue or canne
haue here in this worlde. Let vs not thinke
there.

therefore to be riche before God, or that our
neighboꝝ are poorer then we, as the Pharisee
thought and sayd: but let vs be certaine and re-
solued in this opinion, that before God we haue
not any thing whereof we make sure accompt:
neither righteousnes nor wisdom: nor vertue,
that we may set out or alledge before his iudge-
ment. And touching our neighbours we must
alwayes thinke, that we haue so litle, that we
maye not once dare preferre or compare our
selues to any of them.

Nowe being thus prepared to presente our
selues before God, to witte, through a right
knowledge of our selues, through an inward
feeling of our vices and corruptions, and by an
humble confession of our errours and imper-
fections, it is meete yet to seeke out a right
eousnes, that we may bring it out there, and
such a one as is not onely sufficient to susteine
the rigour and seueritie of that iudgement: but
also to obtaine full forgiveness and iustification
of all sinnes and offences, and of all accusations
which our aduersaries can allege there against
vs: which we can not finde in our selues, nor in
any mortall man as we haue shewed and decla-
red before. For all haue gone astraye, and are
of them selues abominable before God, there is
not one that doeth good no not one. Noah was

*The secōde
point shew-
ing that
wee must
finde though
not in our
selues, a
perfecte
righteous-
nes that
may stande
before god:
& in what
that right-
eousnes
consisteth.*

*Psal. 14. 1.
Rom. 3. 12.
Gen. 9. 21.*

him selfe there with the vertue & strength of his
 owne righteousness. For this is as a great thun-
 der, that neuer putteth forth his might but a-
 gainst thinges of resistance: but against any
 heape of earth, or against a wolle packe, or
 some such other flexible & peeling substance,
 the blow is broken and it streightwayes dyeth.
 It is a great reproch and shame amongst men
 for a man to breake and become bankrupte for
 worldly goods: but before God it is a great glo-
 rie and honour, and we know not how to do any
 thing more profitable and honourable for vs,
 then (as a man woulde saye) to laye the keyes
 vnder the doore, and to forsake all, confessing
 that we haue no meane to paye, & to discharge
 our selues towards his righteousness. We had
 neede in this case to be lyke couetous men, who
 alwayes thinke that they are poore, how great
 substance soeuer they haue, because they haue
 more regard to that they desire, then to that they
 haue. Moreover, they thinke alwayes (as the
 Poete sayeth) that their neighbours vineyard
 & feld is goodlier & more fruiteful then theirs.
 We in like maner considering both our selues,
 and the whole estate of our lyfe, shall finde that
 that which is maymed and wanting in vs, is
 more then that which eyther we haue or can
 haue here in this worlde. Let vs not thinke
 there.

Simili-
 Andes the
 thing what
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 saythfull
 ought to be
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 present the
 selues be-
 fore God.

I

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therefore to be riche before God, or that our neighbours are poorer then we, as the Pharisee thought and sayd: but let vs be certaine and resolved in this opinion, that before God we haue not any thing whereof we make sure accompt: neither righteousnes nor wisdomie: nor vertue, that we may set out or alledge before his iudgement. And touching our neighbours we must alwayes thinke, that we haue so litle, that we maye not once dare preferre or compare our selues to any of them.

Nowe being thus prepared to presente our selues before God, to witte, through a right knowledge of our selues, through an inward feeling of our vices and corruptions, and by an humble confession of our errors and imperfections, it is meete yet to seeke out a righteousnes, that we may bring it out there, and such a one as is not onely sufficient to susteine the rigour and seueritie of that iudgement: but also to obtaine full forgiveness and iustification of all sinnes and offences, and of all accusations which our aduersaries can allege there against vs: which we can not finde in our selues, nor in any mortall man as we haue shewed and declared before. For all haue gone astraye, and are of them selues abominable before God, there is not one that doeth good no not one. Noah was

The secōde point shewing that wee must finde thogh not in our selues, a perfecte righteousnes that may stande before god: & in what that righteousnes consisteth.

Psal. 14.1.

Rom. 3.12.

Gen. 9. 21.

Rumb. 20. **Drinke :** Moses murmured at the waters of
24. miribah : Abraham was an Idolater : David
Iosua. 24.2 a murderere and adulterer : S. Paule a perse-
2.Sam. 11.4 cutour of the Church : S. Peter denied Iesus
1.Tim. 1.13 Christ : S. Iohn with his brother James, and
Iohn. 18.25 the other Apostles were ambitious. To con-
Mat. 20.20 clude, there was not any among all the fathers
Luc. 22.24. and Sainctes, that haue bene since the foun-
 dation of the worlde, to whom it hath not come
 to passe to committe some one notable fault or
 other in their life time, and who not continually
 acknowledged his great sinnes, as occasiō hath
1.Cor. 1. 29 bene offred vnto him. So as no flesh hath wher-
 of to boast it selfe or to glorie before God, who
 hath shut all men vnder sinne and infidelitie, to
Rom. 11.32 the ende, that he may haue mercie on all, & that
 euery one may acknowledge and confesse, that
 his saluation in and thzough all, consisteth in
 the onely grace and mercie of God.

*Our righte-
 ousnes is in
 Christ Iesus
 alone.*

We must not therefore thinke to finde the
 righteousness that we seeke after, any where
 else, then in Iesus Christ, of whome Ieremie
 sayeth : his name is called the eternall, our
1.Cor. 1. 30 Righteousnes. S. Paule sayeth, agreeably to
 the Prophet, that he was made our Righte-
 ousnes, wisdom, sanctification and Redemp-
Rom. 5. 19. tion. And else where he sayeth : that as by one
 mans disobedience, many became sinners : so
 by

by the obedience of an other many shal become
 ryghteous. To what tendeth all that which is
 spoken of him in the scripture? to witte that he
 hath payed our debtes: that by him we are re-
 conciled to God his father: that he hath obtey-
 ned for vs remission of our sinnes: that he is
 our resurrection and our lyfe, and our interces-
 sour to the father, that by his death and sacri-
 fice, he hath pacified the wrath of his father a-
 gainst vs: that he hath washed vs in his blood:
 and by an infinite number of other excellent sen-
 tences that are settte out vnto vs, and tende to
 no other ende, but to make vs know and to per-
 swade vs, that there is no other but he alone
 who is our righteousnes, and the meane of our
 saluation and of our lyfe.

*Isai. 53. 4.
 Collos. 1. 20*

2. Cor. 5. 19

Iohn. 11. 25

1. Tim. 2. 5.

Esay. 53. 5.

Apoc. 1. 6.

It is not then the lawe, nor any other cere-
 monies or sacrifices of goates, sheepe, oxen and
 lambes, nor yet any workes and vertues that
 can iustifie vs before God: but the onely blood
 of Iesus Christ, through which his testament
 and newe couenaunt which he hath made with
 vs, is passed, accorded, sealed and ratified. All
 thinges (sayeth he) are giuen vnto me of God
 my father. If we then will haue all that is ne-
 cessarie for our happynesse, as the fauour of
 God, righteousnes, lyfe, light, the forgiveness
 of our sinnes, and the holy spirit to regenerate

Heb. 9. 10.

Ti. 3. 5.

Mat. 11. 27

Iohn. 6. 27. and sanctifie vs: we must adressed our selues to Christ, forasmuche as it is he, whom the father hath chosen to bee Treasurour and steward of all his graces. Moses by whom the law was published and deliuered to the people, conducted them safely through the deserte: but he brought them not to the place of their rest: *Iosu. 1. 6.* For that was Iosue, who was a figure of Iesus Christ, who made them passe ouer Iordaine, to establishe them in that possession and inheritance which God had promised vnto their fathers.

*The effect
of the lawe
toward the
faithfull.
Simili-
tudes.*

Heb. 4. 8.

*S. Augu-
stin vpon
S. Iohn.*

The lawe therefore maye well leade vs and teache vs the way that we must take and walke in the middelt of the darkenes and wilbernesse of this worlde, like as some marke by the waye sides, may well directe vs, and shewe vs which waye to take: but the lawe can not giue vs strength and courage to goe through, if we be wery, neither enable vs to come to the place whither wee goe. Likewise the lawe can not bring vs to that rest, which God hath promised vnto his elect: nor any other but our great Iosue, that is to say, Iesus Christ our Lorde, who onely can doe it, by his righteousnes. Therefore S. Augustin sayde very well: it is very necessarie that we dayly lift vp our eyes on high, to beholde that Serpent hanging dead on the Crosse,

Crosse, to the ende we maye be p̄serued from the venome and bytyng of that serpent that is aliue and raigning yet in the worlde. And in an other place he sayeth: this is the waye in which we must walke, and the truth vpon which we must rest, & the path in which we must goe.

When then we are once marching towards him, we ought not to feare but that going on in this waye, and continuing therein, wee shall come in the ende to the goale and to the felicitie, whither we bende our selues. Forasmuch as this is a sure waye which can not be stopped nor layd with theeuës, nor drowned with any showers or floodes of waters. Whereouer, it is plaine and streight and hath neither rockes nor blockes or any other lettes which maye make vs stumbe. It remayneth onely then that when we are in this waye, we keepe our selues there withour standing still, or going backwards, or turning aside either to the right hand or the left: because we can no soner leaue it, nor departe in any other manner, but by and by we goe astraye, and are layde open to all kinde of daungers: Euen like as in winter wee can no

*Christ is on-
ly the waye
the truth
& lyfe.*

Similitudes

waye we are in sinne and in death : forasmuch as he is the life that quickeneth vs , the Sunne that giueth vs light, and the fier that warmeth, comforteth and refresheth all his members. As the mone hath no light but that it hath from the Sunne, and as that light is litle or great, as it is neare or farre of , in suche sort that if it depart from it, it remayneth altogether obscure and darke : Euen so in like manner the Church hath no light, righteousness, life, helth, strength, and happynes, but that, which it hath pleased her hus band Iesus Christ to giue vnto her, because of that vnion and fellowshippe , which he hath with her . Wherefore if at any time she be separated from him, and that there be a diuorſe between her and her hus band, there remayneth to her nothing but darkenesse , vice and wretchednesse.

Gen. 2. 23. Eue in the beginning was created of the

Ephe. 5. 30. flesh, bone, and bloude of her hus band : euen so

The regeneration of the church. the Church is regenerated by the participatiō that she hath with the fleshe of Iesus Christ, through the sacrificing whereof she was redeemed, washed & purged from all filchines in his bloude , and through the participation of his bones was fortified and mainteyned against all tentation . For he who in the beginning was the aucthour of our lyfe, he is likewise now the aucthour

aucthour of our good lyfe. And we must not thinke that there are two diuers beginnings of our being and righteousnesse. For he him selfe that hath made vs mē, hath also made vs Christians: and as in the beginning he created vs and made vs of nothing: euen so afterwarde, he regenerated vs, being nothing, but vanitie, the childe of wrath and maledictiō: and when we were worse then nothing he chose vs and that before we were conceived and borne, he hath called vs when as rebellious seruantes to maisters, we fledde from him: when we turned our backes to him: he iustified vs being sinners, sanctified vs being prophane and polluted, raised vs vp being dead: And will also glorifie vs although we be yet altogether covered with ignominie and corruption: wherupon a man maye inferre that, which S. Cyprian *S. Cyprian* sayeth is very true: that in our saluation wee must glorie in nothing. For there is not any thing of ours, and which we shoulde not confesse to be wholly from God.

If we wil examine this thoroughly, and consider it in euery part, we shal confesse the truth, what soeuer the schoolemen prate & bable, that of our selues we can dispose our selues to receaue our saluatiō when soeuer God offreth it vnto vs. It is so farre of that it can be true, that

The confusion of their error which saye that it is in our owne power to di-

*spouse our
selues to re-
ceiue our
saluation,
when God
offereth it
vnto vs.*

Actes. 9. 5.

quite contrary we are the wholly turned away, and resist against it with all our power. Which thing may plainly appeare by the example of S. Paule, who was called and ledde by Iesus Christ, as it were by strong hande to his sheep folde, euen then, when he was going to Damascus, being carped with a deadly hatred, and enflamed with furie to persecute and bitterly to roote out (if he coulde) the memorie of his name. There is nothing moze certaine,

S. Augustin

then that S. Augustine sayth, that all they that labour and sweate vnder the heauie burden of this flesh, and complaine of this miserable life, they haue but one onely consolation and hope, that is to saye, that Iesus Christ is their Mediatour & their righteousness. By reason whereof whē he made his entraunce into the middelt of Ierusalem, all that went before and behinde him cryed out with one voice, Hosanna, &c. that is to saye: Saue vs O sonne of Dauid our Sauiour. To the end to shew that there was neuer good man neither before nor after his coming which did hope to be saued by any other meanes, then onely through his righteousness and obedience. And therefore S. Augustine

S. Augustin

sayeth, that all the Sainctes, since Abell vnto Iohn Baptist, and after the Apostles, vnto the ende of the worlde ought not to be prai-

sed

sed but in him, and not in them selues. In so much that the first haue sayde, *By soule shall Psal. 34.3.* reioyce in the Lorde: and those that came after haue sayde in lyke manner: *By grace I am that 1. Cor. 15.* I am: and all in generall saye: *That whoso. 10.* euer will glozie he must glozie in God.

And in very truth this is he that hath bozne *The perfe-* the wooll and the fleece, of which was sponne *ction and* this cloth, wherewith we must be clad, that we *righteous-* may be shrowded against heats, cold, and other *nes of Iesus* iniuries of heauen. All you (sayeth the Apo- *Christ.* stle) which are baptised in Christ, haue put on Christ. This is that king, who for the adoz- *Gal. 3. 27.* ning of the Queene his spouse hath made for her rich and sumptuous robes, as the *Psal. 45. 14* mist sayeth: *Ezech. 16. 9.* Which thing Ezechiell sheweth also more clearly: I haue washed thee with water, yea I haue washed away thy blood from thee, in which thou wast altogether polluted: I haue annoynted thee with oyle, and clothed thee also with brydzed worke, and haue sette a crowne of Golde vppon thy head: and I haue decked thee with golde and siluer, that thou mightest be very bewtifull. All that same long Alegorie, which he vseth there in the xvi. of his prophesie, is to no other ende, but to extoll the righteousnes of Iesus Christ, with which the Church is apparailled and adozned: with those

other precious giftes, graces and blessings, wherewith she is altogether couered and replenished. And as there is nothing, moze vncleane then she, when she is naked; so is there nothing moze beautifull then she, when she is decked in the liuerie and colour of her husband. For then hath she a speciall grace, that makes her verie amiable, delightfull, and in passing good liking to God himselfe: Moreover, being so clothed in this robe of innocencie, all that was foule in her, and which disfigured her, is in suche sort couered and defaced, that there appeareth no moze vncleannes in any part of her, because Iesus Christ (as S. Augustine sayeth) is as a spounge which wipeth vs & cleanseth vs from all our filthynes, which he taketh in exchaunge for the beautie, righteousness, and perfection, which he communicateth vnto vs: Wherein we ought to acknowledge and to adoze this great and incomparable loue which he beareth vs, and which he hath truely and in effect shewed vnto vs, heaping vppon vs at the daye of our mariage so great and precious ioyes: although he receaue nothing of vs in dowrie, but olde baggage altogether couered with thicke and filthie dirte: to witte, euen our imperfections and iniquities.

We receaue then, in doing this thinge two
great

great commodities of his righteousness, which
 serue vs for two purposes: to witte first to draw
 vs out from the mier and claye wherein wee
 were buried: to decke vs with goodly robes
 wherewith we are clad, to make vs beautifull:
 that is to saye, to deliuer vs from the male-
 diction and curse, wherinto we were fallen: and
 then on the other side to blesse vs and to bring
 vs into fauour with God his father, to drawe
 vs backe from pouertie, and to enrich vs: to
 raise vs vp from death, and to giue vs life: to
 drawe vs from hell, and to make vs mounce vp
 into heauen. Euen as Iesus Christ on the one
 part hath deliuered vs from feare, terrour and
 toymment of conscience, sparring and shutting
 vp hell gates: so on the other he hath set vs in
 a certaine and vndoubted hope of euerlasting
 life, and of a blessed rest, opening his paradise
 vnto vs. This is that, which is sayd of him in
 the scripture: that he keepeth the keyes of death
 and of life: the one, to make fast and shut vp the
 gate, which was alwayes open to swallowe vs
 vp and deuour vs: and the other, to open vn-
 to vs the kingdome of heauen, which was al-
 wayes locked and shutte against vs. By meane
 whereof at his death the baile that let the en-
 traunce into the Sanctuarie was broken and
 cleft into two partes: to the ende that that way

*Christ deli-
 uereth vs
 from death,
 and giueth
 vs eternall
 life.*

Apoc. i. 18.

Mat. 27. 51

might be made open for vs, and that euery one might haue a meane and libertie to come vnto God, and to presente them selues before him with confidence. This is the cause that Paule writing to the Hebrzewes sayd: that by his flesh he hath prepared a waye for vs to heauen, to attaine vnto lyfe. Forasmuch as he hath in that flesh rendred vnto God for vs perfect obediēce: and by his death hath satisfied his righteousness for our sinnes, obtaining for vs by this meanes, the forgiuenes of our sinnes, and through this remission righteousness, and by righteousnesse the grace and fauour of God, and by Grace, life: in such sort as we may nowe presente our selues to him in all assuraunce: who before was as a consuming fire, to consume vs and bring vs to nothing &c: but now by the meanes of Iesus Christ is a shadowe to relieue and refreſhe vs againe.

By Iesus
Christ alone
we haue ac-

ceſſe vnto
God the fa-
ther.

Gen. 28. 12

Coloff. 2. 9.

Iſai. 7. 8.

This is the reason for which Iesus Christ was figured, by the ladder which Iacob ſawe when he ſlept, wherevpon the glorie of God reſted it ſelfe. Forasmuch as in the humanitie of Christ dwelled the fulneſſe of the Diuinitie bodely, becauſe by it God deſcendeth downe vnto vs: Euen as Iesus Christ hauing taken our humanitie, was called Emmanuel, which is ſo muche to ſay as God is with vs, ſo alſo wee through

through him mounte vp as it were by degrees *Mat. 1. 23.*
to heauen, where our conuersation is, & wherof *Philip. 3.*
at this day we are Citizens & of the householde *20.*
of God. Being then very God and very man *Ephe. 2. 19.*
of two diuerse natures, the one diuine and the
other humaine, which are conioyned and vni-
ted together inseparablie, without any confu-
sion or diuision: in that he is God, we must goe
vnto him to be in safety, and to liue happely: and
on the other side in that he is man, he is the way
by which we must march on to attaine to euer-
lasting lyfe. So the we must go to Iesus Christ *S. Augustin*
that is God, by Iesus Christ that is man, by
the word that is made flesh, to the word which
was in the beginning with God, and by the
bzeade which men eate vnto the bzeade which
Angelles eate.

And there is no neede that we seeke for any *All our fe-*
other but him, whether it be to rest our selues *licitie con-*
in, or to leade and direct vs thither. For being *sisteth in*
God, he is the soueraigne good, and the ende *Christ alone*
whereunto all our appetites and desires ought
to be directed. And when we are come thither,
there is the place where we must rest and alto-
gether repose our selues: forasmuch as he is
perfect and replenished with all vertue & righ-
teousnes, which he communiceth vnto vs, by
meanes of that communion and fellowship that

we haue with him. To conclude then, he is the waye that must leade vs to our felicitie, and the onely meane to make vs attaine thither. When we are washed with his bloude, this is it that preserveth vs from that destroyer, this is the cloude that shrowdeth vs from being burned & consumed with the extreme heat of the wrath of God, and the libertie whereinto we must retire from the furie of the enemy that pursueth so harde after vs. To be shor't, this is the gate of saluation and the haven where we must harbour and saue our selues in the time of tempeste.

*We obtain
through
Christ the
blessing of
God.*

Gen. 27. 19

Exod. 28. 2

This is the cloke vnder which we may obtaine the blessing of God, as Iacob obtayned that of his father Isaake, being disguised with the apparell of his elder brother Esau. And as the high Priest neuer appeared before the face of God, without his holy embroidzed garmets, his Ephod, his robe, and his other priestly apparell, without which he coulde not finde any fauour when he appeared in his presence: Euen so (to follow the truth of this figure) we ought neuer to presente our selues before God (if we will be accepted and receaued of him,) but we must be clothed and decked with the righteousness and innocencie of his sonne: wherewith if we be once couered, we neede not feare that we

we shalbe reiected and despised of him, or that there is any enemy whosoever he be, that hath any power to hurt vs. For suche armour can defende vs euen from the wrath of God it selfe, against which no other thing can resist.

It is written that Alexander hauing concealed a great hatred against the citie of Jerusalem, was fully resolved utterly to destroye it, because that laying siege to the citie of Tyre the inhabitauntes of Jerusalem had refused to helpe him with victuals and other munition which he had demaunded of them. Nowe after that he had taken Tyre, he marched forth with all his armie against Jerusalem, with full purpose utterly to destroye it. The which thing when the high Priest named Jaddus vnderstoode, he apparailed him selfe with the holy garmentes of the high Priest, and so presented him selfe before Alexander, who vpon the suddaine, when he sawe him in this habite, alighted from his horse, and bowed his knees before Jaddus, and reuerenced him, and shewed him great honours, and great loue to the countrey, and gaue great giftes to the temple. Nowe if an enemy so furious and terrible were so suddainly appeased, at the onely sight of this high Priest so apparailed (who was but a figure of Iesus Christ:) what shall it be when Iesus Christ

*Ioseph lib.
11. de anti-
qui. Iudaic.
cap. 8.*

shal appeare in his glozie and all his members with him, clad and couered with his righteousness, and shewing them selues to all the world, in such and so magnificall and glorious appa-
rell? Shall not the deuils and hell bowe their knees then for feare when they shall see him in his maiestie and in such excellent glozie?

Let vs conclude then that being garnish-
ed and couered with the righteousness of Je-
sus Christ, we can haue no lacke of strength
and might to vanquish and ouercome our ene-
mies, nor of any other thing that may make vs
S. Ambrose perfectly happy what soeuer. As *S. Ambrose*
writeth very elegantly, in his seconde booke
of Virginitie, that Iesus Christ is vnto vs, all
in all things: If we be sicke, he is our phisician:
If we haue an Ague, and that we are altered,
he is our fountaine: If we be laden with iniqui-
tie he is our righteousness: If we be weake and
weryed, he is our strength: If we feare death,
he is our life: If we desire to mounte by to hea-
uen, he is our ladder: If we haue bene darke-
nes, he is our light: If we haue hungered, he
is our bread and nourishment. Whereupon we
may perceauue and knowe the great riches and
commodities that Iesus Christ bringeth vnto
all them that possesse him.

Now hauing shewed that there is no other
righte:

righteousnes, but the righteousness of Christ, *The shirde point shewing in who the iustice of God is, and howe a man maye obayne it.* which can be sufficient to beare the rigour of the iudgement of God, and that maye enable vs to appeare and aunswere there: it remaineth now that we declare vpon what matter it woꝝketh and where it resteth & dwelleth: howe it maye bee obtayned: and in what sort a man maye assure him selfe of it: finally, hauing obteyned it, what fruites it bzingeth forth in vs.

First the righteousness of Christ hath two principall partes, to witte Iustification, and Sanctification, *The righteousness of Christ hath two partes.* that is to saye: when it is communicated vnto vs, although that before wee were the wickedest in the worlde, and guiltie of death before God, and moreouer, that our nature was altogether corrupted and teynted in euery part of it: *Howe we are iustified.* notwithstanding all this, we are holden and reputed for righteous before God, and are allowed and receaued of him for his childeꝛen and heires, when we are prouided of this righteousness, and when we are clothed with it, he giueth vs his holy spirite, to leade vs and conduct vs (as a schoolemaister doth his childeꝛen) and for to sanctifie, instruct and stꝛengthen vs in all his wayes. And that this is true S. Paule writeth, not onely that it was sayde of Abraham that his fayth was counted to him for righteousness: but also that *Rom. 4. 22.*

2. Cor. 5. 19

wee shalbe accompted righteous before God, as he was, if we beleue in Iesus Christ: Also, God was in Christ and reconciled the worlde to himselfe, not imputing their sinnes vnto them. And ioyning both these partes together in the first Epistle to the Corinchiens, he sayd to them speaking of their lyfe, that they had bene altogether led in wickednes and were dissolute in all kinde of mischiese: but that they were now washed, iustified and sanctified in the name of Iesus Christ, and thzough the spirite of God.

1. Cor. 6. 11

*We are
iustified &
sanctified
by the righte-
ousnes &
holynes of
Christ.*

*The first
reason.*

Now if we will knowe by what meane this is done, we must note, that being vnited by fayth in our Lorde Iesus Christ, and grafted in him, (as members in their body,) that he is then become our head, and we are ioyned to him as the husbände to his wyfe. By meanes whereof he chargeth him selfe with all our debtes, and appointeth him selfe to be the answerer and pledge for vs, to the ende hee maye paye all for vs and thzoughly acquite vs of all, that we are indebted and bounde for, offering him selfe to satisfie the righteousness of God, by his owne death, to the which death we were bounde by reason of our sinnes: and to deliuer vs by his Crosse, from the curse, to which we were likewise subiect, for hauing disobeyed the

Gala. 3. 13

the will of God, and broken his lawe, in a thousande and a thousande thinges: he hath also rased out our disobedience, by his obedience, which being so perfect & accomplished in all pointes, he hath supplied and made amendes for all our faultes and imperfections, and for the duetie wherewith wee were bounde to God with all our might, being his creatures, chilszen and seruants. The death then which Iesus Christ hath suffred, the sacrifice which he hath offred; the curse which he hath borne, & the obedience that he hath rendred: all this was done in our name, and for our discharge, and is receaued befoze the iudgement of God, for acquital in full payment and discharge of all our debtes, in such sort that no moze can be demaunded againe of vs, he hauing thzough his innocencie fully satisfied that promise which he had made for vs. Beholde the first reason, why the righteousness of Iesus Christ is imputed vnto vs and accepted of God in his iudgement.

Rom. 5. 19.

The seconde reason is, that being knitte and vnited togethe r by mariage, both we and he are but one body and one flesh: and there is a mutuell communion between vs. And as he partticipateth with our afflictions, miseries, pauerities and infirmities, so when we are persecuted by tyrants, he complaineth with vs and lamen-

2. Reason.

Ephe. 5. 30.

teth our aduersities and sorowes, likewise,
 when we are hungrye, sicke, diseased, in prison,
 &c. he beareth and endureth all our calamities
 with vs. We also on the contrary part are par-
 takers of all his benefites, graces and giftes
 which his father hath bestowed vpon him: and
 in generall of all that he hath done and suffred
 for our saluation and redemption: we are anoin-
 ted, as he was, with the oyle of his holy spirite:
 we are dead and buried with him, and we are
 raised vp and caried into heauē with him where
 we are sette at the right hande of God his fa-
 ther, as he is. We are inheritours together
 with him, and we haue part in his glorie, in his
 rest & in all his felicitie, by meane of his righte-
 ousnes, obedience & innocencie, of all which
 thzough his grace we are made partakers. Al-
 so, of his deatch, sacrifice and satisfaction. And
 to concludē, as marchantes whiche are of one
 companie & become parteners, are partakers
 alike of all the profittes and damages which
 growe of their marchandise: euen so Iesus
 Christ, by reason of that societie wee haue to-
 gether with him, giueth vs a parte, and we
 likewise giue him, of all that we haue and pos-
 sesse. The difference that is in this, is, that the
 gaines & losses, that come of the traffique that
 is exercised amongst men is equall and com-
 mon

Rom. 6. 4.
 Coloss. 3. 1.

Ephe. 2. 22
 Rom. 8. 17.

A simili.
 iude.

mon amongst them all, but here we gather vp all the fruites that arise of the righteousness of Iesus Christ: he on the contrarie part taketh vpon him, and chargeth him selfe with all the damages and losses that came of out disobedience.

The thirde reason, for which the righteousness of Christ is imputed vnto vs, is, that being knitte to him, as the members of a body are to their head (the which by meanes of this conjunction receaue thence one influence which giueth them lpe, and distributeth to each their motions and senses according as is fit for their nature, and as is requisite for their actions) we receaue from him as S. Paule sayeth, our life, our nourishment, our growth, our force and strength: for the enabling and disposing of vs to doe those good workes that belong vnto our vocation. And by reason of this conjunction there is suche an vnion betwixt him and vs, that as he communicateth with vs in our afflictions: so we likewise on the other side communicate with him in his riches: we are righteous by his righteousness, we are acquitted by his satisfaction, we are quickened to lpe by his death, and obey God through his obedience. And euen as in a naturall bodie, the power that the eye hath to see, serueth moze to y^e use of the other

3. Reason.
Ephes. 1. 2.

A similitude.

members then for it selfe, because that seeing and marking them all it is watchfull rightly to guide them, and to direct euery one of their actions, not being able in the meane time to see them selues, nor to serue it selfe: euen so the righteousness, innocencie & obedience of Christ Iesus, stande vs in moze stead then him, seeing that notwithstanding he had all these thinges, and was in his nature, lyfe, and whole conuersation absolute and perfect, yet for all this, hee was condemned and crucified. We on the contrarie part albeit his righteousness; innocencie, and obedience be onely imputed vnto vs, yet for all that, by meanes of this imputation we are absolued, iustified and discharged of all our sinnes, and of all the accusations that all our enemies can bring against vs.

*The.2. part
of the right-
eousnes of
Christ.*

2. Cor. 6. 14.

The other parte of the righteousness of Iesus Christ consisteth in the sanctification not onely of vs but also of our works. For although that there is not (as Paule sayeth) any fellowship betweene righteousness and vnrigh-
teousnes, betweene light and darknes, betweene the temple of God and Idolls: yet for all this, whē Iesus Christ will ioyne vs with him selfe; and will choose vs and consecrate vs, to the ende to dwell in vs, as in his temple: he sanctifieth vs first by his spirite & prepareth the house where
he

he will dwell. And because it is ouer streight to entertaine so great a Lord, he enlargeth it: and whereas it is olde and ruinous, he repaireth it and buildeth it newe againe: whereas it is stinking and full of filthe, he sweepeth and clenseth it. And to be brieft, where as it is naked, and vnfurnished, he furnisheth and decketh it. And euen as, when he woulde be bozne of the Virgine Marie, and before he woulde be lodged in her wombe, he sent his messenger before him, that is to saye, his spirite, to the ende to take it vp for him and to set his marke there: so also when he wilbe conceaued in our hartes, and be bozne of vs, he prepareth and regenerateth vs before, sanctifying the place where hee will make his abode.

Nowe this sanctification consisteth in foure pointes. The first is, that we feele and confesse our sinnes, and that we accuse, condemne, and deteste our selues before God as miserable and accursed in all pointes. The second is, that we haue a settled zeale and feruent affection to the studie and exercise of good workes, searching out with all diligence, all the meanes & wayes to applie our selues to good: and shunning on the contrarie, all the thinges that mape turne vs away from it. The thirde is, that we fight couragiously against all the desires and concu-

The sanctification of the faithfull consisteth in 4. pointes.

1. Hatred & detestation of euil.

2. A loue and ende-

uor to good

4. Resistance against temptations.

piscences of our flesh, and that we be strong and resoluēd against all the other tentations of the deuill and the worlde, whether it be that we are sweetly enticed or flattered thereunto, or violently drawen and enforced. And that wee be not colde and white lyuered in these combats, but hardie, vigilant, and attentiuē to espie and to take all occasions, whereby we maye resiste, and vanquishē all our enemies. The fourth is, that as we continually sinne, so we as often also pray diligētly vnto God, that it will please him of his great mercie to pardon our offences. And as the people of Israel, going thzough the desertes, had to fight oftentimes against the serpents, and when they were stong and smitten by them, for to be preserued from the venom and from death, they lifted vp their eyes towarde the brassen serpent that Moyses had set vp amiddest their tentes, by sight whereof they were healed: we in like maner fighting against our concupiscences, if it come to passe at any tyme that they giue vs any blowe, to the ende that this stripe maye not be deadly vnto vs, we must lift vp our eyes towards Iesus Christ hanging vpon the Crosse, and beseech him that he would forgiue vs all our trespasses.

4. Continuall
inuocation
for Gods
fauour.

What is Now when it is sayd that to shewe our sanc-
is to applie tification by the effecte wee must applie our
selues

selues to good workes, it maye not bee vnder- *a mā's selfe*
stand that it is enough to exercise our selues in *to good*
one or in two, leauing the rest behinde: as ma- *workes.*
ny doe, who doe not take nor vse the worde of
God, but in that only where it is agreeable and
maye be referred (they thinke) to their appe-
tite: but it is needful to embrace it wholie, and
not to thinke that we can doe our duetie in any
sort whatsoeuer, vnlesse we enforce our selues
to keepe all the commaundementes of God,
without omitting the least point or title therof.
Euen like as to be healthie in our bodie, it is *A simili-*
not enough, not to haue the plague or a pleure- *inde.*
sie, but generallie to be free from all diseases:
euen so to be holy in our soules, we must bee
cleane from all spottes and defylinges: and we
must take the whole lawe of God, as an vniuer-
sall rule of all our thoughts, affections, wordes
and deedes, to the ende to keepe it from point
to point, and not to omitte any thing which is
there commaunded vs. And what would it pro- *A simili-*
fite in a citie, diligently to watche at one gate *inde.*
and to keepe it shutte against the enemye, if in
meane while all the rest stode wide open to
him? euē so likewise it is to no purpose to keepe
our selues from one vice, vnlesse we make ac-
count, and conscience to abandon our selues
from all others: like as amongst archers (as

sayeth Aristotle) there is but one onely marke whereto they must direct their arrowes to shoot well, and yet many meanes to misse and shoote short: so is there but one onely holines, whereunto we must aspyre, which is a settled desire, fully resolved wholly to obaye God. But there are many kindes of vices & meanes to disobey him, and to withstande his will. We conclude then, that to be applied to good workes, it must not be done to halues, but perfectly and without exception to take care and endeouour to keepe all that God commaundeth.

Of the perfection of workes.

The opinio of the philosophers & schoolemen.

Sentences of the scriptures and auncient doctours.

2. Cor. 8. 12

But here a question must bee resolved, and that is: that if to doe our duetie, and to satisfie the will of God, we must be perfect in euery kinde of vertue. And we can not otherwise be Saintes and Christians, vnlesse we haue in perfection all the pointes of holines. The Philosophers and schoolemen, they saye that this is necessarie, and that a man can not bee sayde to be vertuous vnlesse he haue attained to the fullnes and perfection of all vertues: But the scriptures & the auncient fathers they speake otherwise. For S. Paule sayeth, that the minde is accepted according to that it hath: that is to saye, that we are accepted of God when we imploye that portion and measure of power and strength which hee hath giuen vnto vs to the ende

ende to doe wel, and he is contented with that, although we lagge somewhat behinde, and in a great sort of thinges come very thorte of that ende and perfection, which is propounded and set out vnto vs in the lawe. And the selfe same Apostle confesseth, that he had nothing, but that same onely will: To will is present with me (sayeth he:) but I finde no meane to per- *Rom. 7. 18.*
 forme that which is good. Abraham sacrificed his sonne, no otherwise then in effect, & he had *Gen. 22. 16*
 nothing but the same will which was imputed vnto him, as if he hadde accomplished all that was commaunded him. So as God him selfe witneseth of him, saying: Forasmuch as thou hast done this thing, and to obaye me hast not spared thine onely sonne, I will blesse thee and multiplie thy seede, as the starres of hea-
 uen. Iesus Christ shal say vnto his elect, which shall be on his right hande in the day of iudgement: Come ye blessed of my father: inherite ye *Mat. 25. 34*
 the kingdome prepared for you before the foundation of the worlde. Forasmuche as when I was hungrie ye gaue me meate, &c. This is certaine that among the elect, there was some who being holden in pouertie, or for lacke of abilitie, or by some other let, did not that, which Christ shall saye there they did, which thinges themselues cōfesse not to haue done in the same

place alleaged : And yet for all this , it shalbe sayde vnto all , not because all haue done those things , but because they had a will to doe them. Moreover , if in respecte of vice , the will onely bee enough to conuince and condemne a man , and that he is accompted an adulterer before the iudgement of God , who hath onely looked on his neighbours wyfe to luste after her ; and that he is also reputed a manqueller , that hateth his brother : euen so likewise in respect of good workes we must not doubt but the good will , and desire we haue to performe them is accepted and approued of God though alwayes the effects followe not so soone and so excellent as we desire.

As touching the auncient fathers , they saye the selfe same thing , *S. Ambrose* vppon *S. Luke* , affirmeth that þ righteousnes of a Christian man consisteth moze in the will , then in the worke , and that it ought rather be measured by the affection then by the effect . But in the booke which he hath witten *De fuga mundi* , he sayeth , it is a harde thing for one to keepe him selfe wholly from vanitie , and that it is impossible altogether to depart from it , otherwise then in will and desire alone. *S. Augustine* vppon the first *Epistle* of *John* sayeth : that the whole life of a Christian is no other thing but an

an holy desire and good will: And in his ninth
hooke of the Trinitie, he hath a saying seruing
to this purpose worthie to be noted: He (sayeth
he) that knoweth righteousnesse and loueth it
perfectly, that man is righteous, notwithstanding
that outwardly he hath not yet shewed by
his workes, in any sort, that good affection of
his harte. To conclude, looke where and howe
often so euer God hath commended vnto vs the
studie and keeping of his lawe, he doeth it al-
wayes in these tearmes: Thou shalt take heede
to doe those things which I commaunde thee:
To giue vs to vnderstande that the principall
point that he requiers of vs, is that we haue a
desire to please him, and a readie good will to
doe that, which he hath commaunded vs accor-
ding to that grace and strength that he hath gi-
uen vs, which is the thing that he most esteemeth
in vs. As we see a father a great deale
more to content him selfe with that his sonne
doth, be it neuer so litle, then of all that his ser-
uant can do: because he esteemeth their workes
not according to their greatnes, or the payne
and time that they haue spent in doing them: but
according to the will and readines which they
haue that doe them.

We must then conclude, that the holynes of
a Christian man, the duety and diligence which

maketh him to imploie those graces that he hath receaued of God, to profite in his feare, and continually to better him selfe in the exercise and growth of good workes, are imperfect in many respectes. And as *S. Jerome* sayeth: the perfection of all the righteousness that is in the flesh is maymed: & to be perfect it is necessarie that we acknowledge, confesse, and feelee with an inward feeling, that we are imperfect.

Jeronim.

S. Augustine

S. Augustine confirmeth the same, saying: that a righteous mans vertue maye be sayde to be perfect with this condiction, that his perfection consisteth in hauing the knowledge of his imperfection, and in making humble confession thereof befoze God. And howe so euer there be great lacke in vs in this point, & that our righteousnesses are as vnperfect beginnings in this worlde: yet neuerthelesse, we must not thinke that he will reiect and denie them: For he is not as other creditours, rigorous and not to be intreated, who will not be contented with him that is bounde befoze they be payed and satisfied the uttermost farthing: but he is gentle and gracious, and is pleased with vs, when we denie not our debtes, and will not excuse our selues in this, that we are not able to paye: but without all dissimulation or constraynte, wee frankely and freely confesse, shewing him the desire

desire we haue to satisfie him, which yet we can not doe (by reason of our pouertie) and therefore humblie beseeche him that he will take in good part that litle we haue, and offering that vnto him, which he hath giuen vs of his owne speciall grace.

When we thus submitte our selues wholly vnto him, and pray him to vse such fauour and gentlenes as shall please him towards vs, we likewise bearing and shewing such a sinceritie and vprightnesse towards him in the assayes we haue to doe, there is no doubt but he will in like manner take in good part that litle which we present vnto him: and that both we and our woꝝkes (howe imperfect so euer they are) shall be accepted and approued of him, in the fauour of his sonne, as if they were perfect, and absolute in euery point. For a father casteth not away his childꝛe, because they are sicke, crooke backt, blinde, or maymed of hande or foote, or otherwise counterfaite and imperfect: but handleth them moze tenderly, & dealeth moze softly with them, then with the others, respectinge their debilitie and feeblenes. We cast not away wine though it haue lyes or groundes, nor golde howe so euer it be couered with dirte. A hus bande man refuseth not lande, though it be ouergrowen with bzambles and bzpers: but

*A simile.
inde shew-
ing that
God reie-
cteth not
his childꝛe
though
they be im-
perfect.*

will vse the greater diligence to stocke it and to plowe it, hoping with his diligence, that it will bring forth fruite plentifully: God likewise will not refuse and put vs away, because he seeth manye imperfections and infirmities in vs, naye rather that is an occasion, that he will take the greater pitie vpon vs: as David sayeth: Albeit (sayeth S. Ambrose) the light be oftentimes hidden by a cloude, which is carried befoze the sunne, yet therfoze it is not quite put out. And the sunne ceaseth not to bee the sunne, though his beames be stopped, and can not pierce vnto vs: euen so likewise howsoeuer our sayth oftentimes be disfigured, and corrupted by many errors, doubtings and distrustes: it is not therfoze quite choked, and we leaue not to be faithfull for these imperfections.

Psal. 103.

13.

S. Ambrose

Two notable questions.

*1. Why God accepteth the imperfect worker of his childre.
2. Why the faithful are not perfectly regenerated in this worlde.*

But befoze I ende this matter, it is meete, that we yet handle two pointes: one, of which, is the reason, why our holynesse is acceptable vnto God, and the seruice which we doe vnto him, seeing both the one and the other are imperfect: and seeing in his lawe he reiecteth all the sacrifices, which had in them any imperfection at all. The other point is concerning the cause wherefoze he regenerating & sanctifying vs by his holy spirite, hath yet leste suche an heape of vices and imperfections in vs, and so much

much corruption in our nature and lyfe, which notwithstanding all the diligence and labour we can, to correct and mortifie it, yet we can not come any thing neare, to be whollie deliuered and exempte from it. Touching the first of those two pointes, there are two reasons, for which our vertues and woakes are approued & accepted befoze God, howe imperfect so euer they be. One is, because Iesus Christ hath couered and taken them vnder the cloke of his righteousness, as soone as we are vnited & knit vnto him: so as no such spotte appeareth in vs that can offend God. And for that he is our Mediatour towards God his father, we see God no otherwise then in him and by him: As the father in like manner will not see nor beholde vs other where then in Iesus Christ, & through his humanitie as members and partes of his body. And this is the cause that maketh vs to appeare altogether other then we are: For euen like as looking aside through any glasse, be it blew or yelowe or of any other colour, all the things we see seeme to vs to be of the colour of the glasse, through which we did beholde them: So God also beholding and looking vpon vs in his sonne, we seeme to him to be of his colour, and we haue the appearaunce and brightnes of his innocentie and righteousness: which causeth

*An answer
to the first
question.*

Similitudes

that in seeing and touching vs, he thinketh he seeth & toucheth his owne naturall Sonne. As Isaac speaking to Jacob his younger sonne, and feeling his necke and handes, thought it had bene Esau his eldest sonne, The other reason is, that the grace of Gods spirite, beinge mingled with our woꝝkes, our woꝝkes deriue & fetch frō thence their greatest dignitie, beauty, estimation & free strength, as when we mingle water with wine in a cuppe or in a glasse, that which is taken in there is called wine, though water be mingled with it: and albeit there bee moꝝe water then wine (as it maye be) yet that which is the moꝝe principall and most pꝛecious part of all beareth the name: euen so the woꝝkes which we doe by the grace of God, be it that they haue a great many spottes and imperfections, as they pꝛoceede from vs, yet foꝝ all that, they holde alwayes the name and reputation of him, who is their pꝛincipall aucthour.

*A simile.
inde.*

*An answer
to the second
question.*

Concerning the seconde point, which is to know the reason why God doth not whollie regenerate and sanctifie vs, from the first houre that he calleth vs to his knowledge, seeing that all his woꝝkes are perfect, and that the lawe requireth of vs, that we shoulde be holie as he is holie: that is to say, that we shoulde be wholly and perfectly holie. We must marke, in verie deede

deede, that our regeneration and sanctification are woꝝkes of God which are perfect and absolute, as all that he doth is : But this perfection is successiue oꝝ by degrees. As we see that it is in many of his creatures. Seede cast into the earth doth not by and by sproute, encrease and come to his perfection : but by space and length of time, it attaineth to his perfection and ripenesse, in that season that God hath appointed. A tree likewise, is not perfect as soone as it is planted. An infant is not straight wayes vppon the suddaine as soone as it is conceaued in the wombe of his mother, become a man, but with time : euen so we are not all at the first dashe regenerated. But this regeneration riseth by degrees, and being once begonne, then it proceedeth faire and softly by litle and litle encreasing euery daye, till we come to everlasting life in the heauens. And in that God delighteth so to regenerate and entierly to refoꝝme vs, to make vs altogether newe creatures, he doth it foꝝ three great and weightie reasons. First, because he would humble vs, foꝝasmuch as being naturally enclined to pꝛesume too much of our selues, we haue great neede that this pꝛide be kept vnder : and that this mischeuous inclination which we haue to such manner of arrogancie shoulde be digged by and rooted out of our

Similitudes

Three reasons why God differeth so regenerate vs perfectly.

hartes : which thing God doeth after that he hath adopted vs leauing vs subiect to many miseries and diseases, as well of the body as of the minde, to the ende that by this meane we shoulde be barred from lifting vp our selues in any opinion and admiration of our selues, and that we shoulde not speake more biggely and proudly then we ought : and herein he maketh of a popson, a remedie and p̄seruatiue against the popson that is in our nature : as we see by experience to be done in the cōfection of triacle.

*Similitudes
ful of great
cōsolation.*

For euen like as of the fleshe of the viper men make a soueraigne and excellēt remedie against the byting of them : euen so God maketh of those infirmities that remaine in vs after our regeneration, and which of them selues are deadly and damnable sinnes befoze him, an healthfull remedie to correct and repress the other vices & diseases, which are a great deale more pernicious : as is arrogancie and vaine confidence of our selues, contempt and forgetfulnes of God, and such other like pestilences which would kill vs suddainly, if they were not speedely p̄uented. Which thing our good God doth, who knowing the daunger wherein we are, as a good father is more carefull for our good & saluation then we our selues. By meane whereof, he p̄uenteth and cutteth of the waye that

that leadeth to the danger of death (wherein otherwise we are) by these afflictions & diseases, which alwayes putteth vs in minde and setteth this medecine before our eyes, driuing vs to search after him & to require aide at his hands. He dealeth with vs, as a iudge in some criminall processe, who will giue an enlargement, but yet with condition, or as they saye with a quousque, that is, till the time that he calleth us backe, and putteth him in his former estate wherein he was before, if it happen that he fall into any new fault againe. The iudges doe this to keepe them alwayes in feare and diligence, to doe their duetie, and to stoppe them from taking too great libertie. God likewise doeth so with vs, when he will pardon our finnes and set vs at libertie, leauing vs notwithstanding a great sozte of infirmities and imperfections, which maye alwayes serue him, to charge vs, and for matter to call vs to a reckoning, when we would winde out of that bondage, and boast our selues abroade of the goodlynes of our reason and loialtie.

The seconde reason is, because he would correct our ingratitude, which is a vice as naturall to vs as presumption. For there is nothing, into which we fall so easely, as into the forgetfulnes of God and of his benefites, which

The.2.reason.

we haue receaued of him especially when we are at ease and in prosperitie, which maketh vs wanton, and bereueth vs oftentimes of our senses and vnderstanding; which is an other of the most pernicious vices that can be, and prouoketh the heauy wrath and iudgement of God against vs. And this is the cause, why he leaueth vs alwayes in such necessity to the ende he may meete with suche an inconuenience and giue vs occasion to seeke after him. Againe he doeth vs not all the good hee will doe; at one clappe, fearing least that we woulde utterly abandon and loole it. And herein he doeth as a father of an houtholde well aduised, who at the first dasheth not much aduance his seruants: but doeth for them by litle and litle, the better alwayes to put them in comfort and hope to receaue aduantage at laste, to the ende that by this meane, they may be holden in seruice, and not departe from his house: euen so, God during the time that we are in this worlde, giueth vs more hope, then he doeth benefites (and yet it is plaine that the graces that hee bestoweth vpon vs are infinite) for feare leaste that if he shoulde make vs great and riche at once, and shoulde giue vs out of hande all the good that he keepeth in store for vs, it woulde make vs to abandon his seruice, as we see sometimes it hap-

A similitude shewing the wisdom of God in governing those that be his.

happened to the Jewes by this occasion. As
God repprocheth them by his prophet Ieremye *Iere. 22. 23*
I spake vnto thee when thou wast in prosper-
itie; but thou sayest; I will not heare: this
hath bene thy custome and manner from thy
youth, &c.

The third reason, why God doth not attonce, *The third*
defende & fortifie vs and that throughout, when *reason.*
he hath regenerated vs, is to the end that those
infirmities which yet remayne in vs after our
regeneration, shoulde serue to exercise vs, and
to keepe vs from slothfulnesse and sleeping. For
hauing (as *S. Ambrose* sayeth) a robe or gar-
ment which is all to torne and vnsewed, and
which for this cause had neede to be amended,
we must occupie our selues in repairing and a-
mending the same: and must auoyde by this
meane slothfulnesse and idlenesse. Moreover,
being so exercised we growe more strong and
able to fight against the fleshe and against all o-
ther enemies. Which thing was answered
to *S. Paule* (when he desired to be deliuered *2. Cor. 12. 9*
from that pricke of the flesh that so continually
troubled him) that he ought to contente him
selse with the grace of God which is sufficient:
the strength whereof sheweth it selfe more in
our infirmities then in our prosperities. Marke
then that our diseases and afflictions stande vs

in stead and greatly profite vs, when we suffer
and heare them patiently, and we ought to con-
tent our selues with the onely will of God that
sendeth them, and likewise we must waite that
the ende of these imperfections, which he hath
yet left in vs after that he hath regenerate vs;
is, to keepe vs in obedience, & to bryde vs, that
we doe not stumble and goe astraye. For euen
lyke as to be wyle, it behoueth vs to be fooles
1. Cor. 3. 18. (as S. Paule sayeth) and to the ende we maye
see more clearly (as Iesus Christ sayeth) to
John. 9. 41. be blinde: euen so that we may be perfecte wee
must be imperfect, and that we haue fowle and
dirtie feete, it is to keepe vs occupied in wa-
shing them.

*The fourth
point where
the righte-
ousnes of
Christ is to
be founde.*

Hauiing nowe handled these two partes of
Christes righteousness, it followeth necessarily
to be known, what the matter is wherby this
righteousnes worketh, where it resteth and is
to be founde eyther in him or in vs. Where as
the Sorbonicall sophisters say that we can not
be otherwise righteous, then by the righteous-
nes that is in vs: we saye cleane contrary, to
witte, that þr righteousness which we must haue
to escape the iudgement of God, is not in vs,
but in Iesus Christ. As S. Paule sayeth, that
he was made sinne for vs, that we shoulde be
made the righteousness of God in him. If we
will

2. Cor. 5. 21

will therefore rigely vnderstande, howe his
righteousnes is attributed vnto vs, wee must
know in what respecte our sinne is attributed
vnto him: forasmuch as there is the like reason
of the one, as there is of the other. But it is ve-
rie certaine that our sinnes were neuer effec-
tuallie in Iesus Christ: who being conceived
by the holy Ghost was alwayes holy, innocent,
cleane, and without spotte: but our sinnes were
onely imputed vnto him, to the ende that he
shoulde beare the punishment of them for vs. Heb. 7. 26.
In like manner, his righteousness is not essen-
tially in vs. For in what degree so euer, of holi-
nes or vertue we become vnto in this lyfe, there
is notwithstanding alwayes in vs a great many
of disordred and unruly affections: in our vn-
derstanding a great many of euill thoughtes:
in our mowthes a great many of euill wordes:
in our workes a great many of imperfections
and indirect dealings: in all our lyfe there is
so much corruption and fylthinesse, that of it
selfe it is abhominable and stinking in the
sight of God: Whereupon a man maye well
knowe, that suche a righteousness as that is
that was in the sonne of God, neither dwelleth
nor remayneth essentially in vs, but onely by
imputation: to the ende that thereby we maye
receaue the rewarde. And altogether lyke (as

Coloss. 3. 3.

Saint Paule sayeth that our lyfe is hidde in him, and must not bee reuelled, till the time that hee shall appeare in glory: then so is our righteousnesse, the which appeareth not clearly enough, by reason of our imperfections, no more then our lyfe doeth by reason of our mortallitie and corruption, till the day that God shall appeare in iudgement in the person of his sonne.

The right-
eousnes of
the faith-
full compa-
red to a
robe.

Psal. 132.

This is the reason why this righteousnesse is compared to a robe, according to that which is sayde in the psalme: that the king should be clothed with righteousnesse. For as a robe is not bozne with us, and we haue it not from our mochers womber, as we haue our thimel: & it is not fastened to our bodies as the skinned of beastes: such to likewise neither is this righteousnesse wherewith we are couered, as with a long robe, so the end that our imperfections may not be percoaled. And this is a great beneficence and mercie that God hath wroughte vnto vs, in that he hath not assigned it to our selues nor put it ouer in our owne handes, but hath appointed a steward for whom he hath deliuered it in trust: so much as we are so ill aduised, and so ill hal handes, that had we once the ordering of it our selues, the devil by his sleights and conuayances woulde soone

be.

beguile vs. For if our forefathers who were
so wise & indued with so many excellent graces,
could not keepe safely that originall righteous-
nes for so small a time, (wherewith they were
adoyned from the beginning) and were not able
to preserve them selues for so litle a while from
the crafty fetches and snares of Satan, but that
they lost it: What may happen unto vs, which
are not so wise as they were, if we shoulde haue
the keyes and charge of so great and precious a
treasure, as is the righteousness of the Sonne
of God?

It is a great commoditie and verie good for
a tree, that the life and sappe thereof spredde
in the roote: For this is the meane to defende
and preserve it from the stormes and frostes of
the winces: even so is it for our profite, that our
life and our righteousness are in Iesus Christ
who is our foundation and roote. For being
locked vp in so sure a place, it shall be preserved
and kept for vs against all those that would
robbe vs or snatche it awaye from vs by trea-
son or violence. We see that kings and great
Lords, they neither meddle nor deale with any
money, but they leaue their reuenues in the
handes of their treasurers and receauers to
dispose of them, contenting them selues when
they haue any neede, or other affaires, to be

*Diverse fir-
milindes
shewing
that it is
not neces-
sary that
Christ his
righteous-
nes should
be essen-
tially di-
uisible.*

puruayed and prouided for, of that which is necessary: what need the is there that we should haue our goods in our owne hands, seeing that we shall lacke nothing, that is needefull for vs? We haue the grace of God, we are his children and consequently his heires: we are enlightened, guided, strengthened, and comforted by his spirite: we are citizens of his kingdom, and seruauntes of his householder: to be short, we haue all the profites, rentes and commodities that grow of his righteousness: what would we desire more? Is it not enough that we gather the fruite of a tree, and that it alwayes reniayne in his place, and that we carrie it not away with vs? In like manner also we must content our selues to bee partakers of the fruites of Christ his righteousness, albeit it be not essentially in vs: but onely by imputation; & in as much as through his onely merite it is bestowed vpon vs.

*Howe we
maye be
righteous
by the
righteous-
nes of an
other.*

But here a doubt may be moued, howe we can be righteous, by the righteousness of another, seeing that this is a personall qualitie, which can not be communicated to another, no more then health, wisdom, strength and beautie. How can I be otherwise in health, then by the health that resteth effectually in my bodie? how can it be then, that I should be righteous,

by

by the righteousness, that dwelleth in an other? We must answer that this is done by imputation. And as a man may be acquitted of his creditour, by the payment which some shall make of his owne money in the name of the debtour: euen so we may be righteous, by the righteousness of an other, when he is accepted in our name, as that is of Iesus Christ, when we are vnited and knit vnto him. All the members of the body without the eye, are altogether blinde of them selues, and yet notwithstanding, they cease not every day to doe their duties rightly. The feete goe without stumbling, the handes without offending: in such sort that each one of them is led in his worke by the light of the eye which illuminateth & directeth them: and as the light of the eye is communicated to all the members of the body, who see by it and in it: euen so we in like manner are profited by the righteousness of Iesus Christ, which is imparted with vs, as the light of the eye with the members, to the ende that we maye vse it in the iudgement of God, there to bee acquitted and iustified, and pronounced altogether innocent and discharged from all our faultes and offences.

The similitude of the debtour, acquitted by another.

The similitude of the members of the body enlightened by the eye.

Lorden. 2

The first point shewing by what

Now let vs come to the other point, which is to knowe by what means we maye obtaine

meane, we
may appro-
priate to our
ſelves the
righteous-
nes of Chriſt
Jeſus.

Rom. 1. 17.

Rom. 5. 1.

Abac. 2. 4.

John 3. 16.

John 3. 16.

John 3. 16.

John 3. 16.

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John 3. 16.

John 3. 16.

John 3. 16.

this righteousneſſe, and appropriate it to our
ſelves. The onely meane is Faith: as we may
know by many places of the ſcripture. For S.
Paul ſayeth that the righteousneſſe of God is
by faith. Alſo: that righteousneſſe is revealed in
the Goſpell, and communicated by faith. And
in another place: being juſtified by faith, we
haue peace in our conſcience. And the Prophet
alſo ſayeth: That the righteous man ſhall live
by faith. And Jeſus Chriſt in the worde whereof
I ſpake together ſayeth: that who ſo
ever beleuech in him, ſhall not come into iudgement. And ſo them alwayes that were ſicke,
and were healed, he ſayeth commonly, that their
faith had ſaued them, ſo the end to teach vs that
faith is the meane, which is neceſſarie to ob-
taine not onely righteousneſſe, but alſo the adop-
tion of children, the wholeſome ſauour, and
blessing of our God: and generally all the be-
nefites of Jeſus Chriſt. And altogether like as
we apprehend colours by the ſight, or ſoundes
by the eare: ſo we apprehend by faith
Gods promiſes, in which he offereth life vnto vs
and all other his graces. As Ambroſe ſayeth
faith is ſuch an iſſue and of ſo great ſtrength,
that it obtaineth all that God hath promiſed vs
the beleening in him. And ſo when we ſpeake of faith, we muſt
ſtande

Faith is the
only meane
to faſten vs
to Chriſt, &
obtaine his
righteous-
neſſe.

S. Ambroſe

John 3. 16.

John 3. 16.

John 3. 16.

John 3. 16.

John 3. 16.

stande not by this name a bare opinion which
we may haue of the truth, by a simple perswas- *What the*
sion and consent, whereby we allowe all that is *justifying*
contained in the scripture: but we understande *Faith is.*
by this Faith a lively apprehension of the truth
of Gods promises, and an assurance of his
grace and fauour in Iesus Christ. Also, a full
confidence that is sufficient to beare all the tem-
tations, that can be layde vpon vs, and to beate
downe death, the deuill, and all the gates of
hell, and further to set it selfe against wrath,
in the iudgement and malediction of God; the
which it turneth from vs as a tempest & storme
when we are threatened. From whence we earst
sayd, that the tape containeth the promises of
God; and in them his vnderwritten name and
grace, as the eye doeth the colour, and the eare
the sound; and the other senses their proper
objects: we vnderstande, that of the assurance
and certaintie, onely, and not of any carnall life-
ling. For the thing which we beleue, they
demonstrateth selfe with the hand; not seene with
the eye, nor by any reason, or other kind of know-
ledge comprehended; and yet neuertheless they are
more certaine, then the things which we see,
because our senses maye bee deceaued. As the
eye which will iudge a perron to swim in the wa-
ter to be drowned, although it be verie straigh-
t

81.4.1008

But faith when it is once grounded, & reflecteth
itselfe upon the worde of God, it is assured of
all that is therein taught, and specially it em-
braceth Iesus Christ and draweth from him e-
uerlasting life.

And albeit that oftentimes, considering the
estate & disposition of those matters, it seemeth
to vs that all thinges goe quite backwardes,
contrarie to that which God hath promised vn-
to vs: yet notwithstanding in this case we must
beleue, (as S. Paule saith) in hope against
hope, and in no wise doubt; but his promises
shal be accomplished. For sooner shall heauen,
earth, and all the wo:ld perishe, then the least
lotte of that which God hath promised vs, and
which is proceeded from his mouth, faile to be
fully & wholly accomplished in his time. When
our reason then, or sense will doubt of that
which God hath sayde, or misse and murmur
against it, or any manner of waye, distrust his
promises; we must resist and fetter our selues
thankfully with all our might against it; as Ab-
raham did: and stape our selues (as he did)
wholly vpon this, that God almay hea:th both
will, and might to performe whatsoeuer he hath
promised. And when we come to consider the corrup-
tion and vice of our nature, the rebellion of our
will

Rom. 4. 18.

will against the will of God, our infirmities & imperfections, our distrust also that we haue oftentimes of his loue, and other doubts that we make of his prouidence, we must not then doubt, but that our faith is mightely assailed, and that we haue to fight wonderfull sharpe and dangerous combattles: but that we maye auoyde them, it is needefull (as in all other tentations) to keepe our selues alwayes to the worde of God, and to make it a buckler against all that the deuill, our reason, and sense can alleage against his will, and those promises that he hath made vnto vs. We must (as S. Augustine sayeth) shutte our eyes from all that wee maye see, and from all considerations that may turne vs away or feare vs: and open our eares, onely to heare and meditate vppon that which God sayeth. And if on the one side considering the things that are present, we perceauie our selues a falling, & ready to be cast headlong into any distrust, we must on y other side soz to comforte our selues, beholde Iesus Christ, of whom we are members & sheepe of his pasture, & we must oppose his righteousness against our vices, his life against our death: his obedience against our rebellion, his fauours & rich grace against our wretchednesse and pouertie, his satisfaction against our debtes, his mercie against our mi-

How we must behaue our selues in tentations.

S. Augustine

serie, his strength against our weakenes and ~~re~~
 rations; his merite and intercession, against all
 the accusations & informations which the law,
 our conscience and the deuill him selfe can bring
 forth and alleage against vs: alwayes thin-
 king that where sinne aboundeth, there grace
 yet more aboundeth, & hath farre more strength
 to saue vs then sinne hath to condemne vs. We
 must do, as they that go vp into an high tower,
 who looking downewardes & seeing the depth
 are afrayde to fall; and that they maye be the
 more sure they laye holde of the railles: euen so
 must we alwayes leane vpon the righteousnes
 and death of Iesus Christ, and strengthen our
 selues in that, to the ende we maye be preserved
 from falling downe.

*A simili-
tude.*

*Three que-
stions de-
pending of
the former
point.*

Nowe hauing spoken of the meane whereby
 a man maye laye holde of the righteousnesse of
 Christ, and of the equalitie of Faith that ap-
 prehendeth the same: it remayneth yet, that we
 speake of three thinges. The first, whether
 that for the laying holde vpon that righteous-
 nesse, it bee necessarie that Faith be perfecte.
 Then afterwardes, whether it must be, that it
 must be cleane from all vices: and lastly whe-
 ther, it hauing bene once receaued in our harts,
 we can loose it afterwardes, and be depriued
 of it.

As

As concerning the first point, to wit, of the perfection of Faith, it is impossible, that ever we can attaine therein as much as we are compassed about with a mortal body, which is so grosse and so flauish, & which fighteth without ceasing against the spirite, when it woulde live by it selfe into any heauily meditation; moreouer, hauing such an heape of darkeneses and false opinions in our senses and understanding, it is impossible, & neuer we shoulde haue any perfect knowledge of God, what diligence, paine or trauell so ever we take to get it: hauing in like manner a hart entangled with so great passions & lustes which drines vs hether and t hether, to all vaine affections, in such sort, that by reason hereof, we can not loue God perfectly & so consequently haue any perfect confidence in him: because confidence followeth loue, euen lyke as loue followeth knowledge.

The knowledge therefore and confidence that we haue of God being imperfect, which are the two parts of Faith, it followeth hereof, that it can not be perfect, and that we haue need continually to begge at Gods hande, that he will augment it in vs, and daye by daye stirre vs vp in the meditation of his promises, which is the true meane to nourishe, encrease, and augment Faith. And whereto serue exhorta-

1. To witte,
whether
faith must
be perfecte
for the ap-
prehending
of Iesus
Christ.

And thus
shall we
knowe
that we
must
continue
in the
knowledge
of God
and his
promises
to haue
faith
increased.

And thus
shall we
knowe
that we
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of God
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promises
to haue
faith
increased.

And thus
shall we
knowe
that we
must
continue
in the
knowledge
of God
and his
promises
to haue
faith
increased.

tions, prayers, Sacraments, and suche other exercises, if our faith coulde bee perfect heres seeing that all these are not ordained and sordred in the Church, to any other purpose, then to fortifie, & encrease the knowledge, zeale and affection of the faithfull.

1. Point
whether
Faith must
be cleane
from all
vices.

Now let vs come to the second point. Seeing that our Faith is neuer perfect in this worlde, but is alwayes mingled with an infinite number of infirmities which alwayes remayne in vs, in such sort as there is none can saye his harte is cleane from all sinne: and that we haue neede in respect of this, to begge of God in our prayers, that he will pardon vs our offences, and making the confession of our Faith, to say: I beleue the remission of sinnes: Notwithstanding all this that as yet our faith is very weake & defiled with many imperfections, neuertheless it ceaseth not, to lay holde vpon that, that it shall please God to bestowe vpon it. No otherwise (for examples sake) the as a litle child who with his litle handes, or a pooze man with his ragged and scabbie handes refuse not to take bread and other almes, that a man will bestowe vpon them, as wel as if they were greater and whole. Altogether like as diseases that are vniuersall throught out the whole body, (as is a burning agewe) though they weaken all the partes

A simili-
tude of the
force and
strength of
Faith.

An other
similitude.

partes of the same and speciallie the stomacke,
 moze then all the rest: yet neuerthelesse hinder
 not but that it may take a medicine, yea rather
 the diseale is an occasion vnto it to prouoke it to
 take it: euen so also it ought to be so farre of, that
 the weaknes of our Faith should keepe vs from
 embracing righteousnes and the other benefits
 of Iesus Christ, that it must prepare & dispose
 vs to the contrarie: Accoꝝding to which Iesus *Luc. 5. 35.*
 Christ sayth to the Pharisees who thought the
 selues to be righteous, y he came not for their
 sakes, but to call sinners: adding the reason, to
 wit that they that are sicke haue need of y phis-
 sition. And euen like as our diseales and infir-
 mities let not but that our faith, be it neuer so
 weake, is yet capable of the graces of God, & of
 all the righteousnes of his sonne: euen so the li-
 tlenes of faith maketh it not lesse capable to be
 able to apprehend and embrace that righteouf-
 nesse: And like as altogether the Apple of the *An other*
 eye which is so litle, and yet, for all that can ap- *similitude*
 prehend the light of the Sunne which is spread
 ouer all the horizon, yea and the Sunne it selfe
 which is farre greater, and moze ample then all
 the earth: euen so the eye of faith, albeit that it
 be very small, yet it ceaseth not to laye holde of
 the Sunne of righteousnes, together with his
 light, iustice & other griffes, which are as great

and as many in number.

3. Whether the elect can lose their faith.

But now let vs handle the lastte of the fore-
sayde thre pointes, that is to saye: whether
Faith being once receaued into our hartes, we
can viterly afterwards loose, and forgoe it. For
if hauing once receaued it, wee can not be as-
sured to keepe it constantly to the end, we shall al-
wayes be in doubt of our saluation. But if we be
once perswaded and resolved in this point, that
hauing bene inspired by the spirit of God in our
hartes, it will still there abide, and dwell for e-
uer: this perswasion will alwayes keepe our
spirits quiet and contented, and they shall al-
wayes be ioyfull, yea in the midst of all ten-
tations that may assaile vs. Wherefore it is
very necessarie for vs to marke, and diligent-
ly to imprint in our myndes, all the places of
the holy scripture, in which God hath assured
vs of the continuance and perseueraunce of his
grace and fauour towards vs, and of keeping
vs in the faith, and giuing of all the other giftes
that he will communicate vpon vs. As in the
first place, this testimonie of S. Paule woulde
be marked, which sayeth: that Faith is ioy-
ned with election, and so by consequence foun-
ded vpon the counsaile and will of God which
is everlasting & immutable: Then afterwards
that place of the Romaines where it is sayde:
That

Rom. 8.

Rom. 11. 29

That the giftes and calling of God are without
repentaunce, that is to say, irreuocable, when
he hath once giuen them vnto vs. Also, þ which
is sayde in S. Matthew: That to him that hath, *Mat. 13. 12*
it shall be giuen. If then, wee haue by Gods
grace, Faith and the giftes of the spirite, let
vs be certaine that they shall remaine still with
vs, and looke by the selfe same grace that they
were freely bestowed vpon vs, by the same they
shall be kept and encreased. Also there is an
other place of the Apostle, that all they which *Rom. 8. 30.*
were predestinate to lyfe shall afterwarde be
called, iustified, and in the ende glorified: If
these soure pointes, wherein is contained the
whole summe of the saluation of God his chil-
dren be so chained in order one to the other, by
an immutable decree of God: we must cōclude,
that as our election is sure, stable & permanent,
so also are the other effects that doe necessari-
ly followe it: Also that which S. Iohn sayeth *1. Iohn. 5.*
in his first Epistle: that he that is bozne of God
sinneeth not, and the wicked toucheth him not.
Also, that goodly protestation that the Apostle
maketh for him selfe and all the faithfull, with so
great assuraunce: I am (sayth he) certaine, that *Rom. 8. 38.*
there is neither death, nor life, nor Angells, nor
principalties, nor powers, nor things present,
nor thinges to come, nor thinges high, nor

things low, nor any creature, that shalbe able to separate vs from the loue of God which is in Iesus Christ our lord. Also, which Iesus Christ sayeth to his disciples: If any man loue me he will keepe my word, & my father will loue him, and we will come vnto him and dwell with him. Whereupon we maye note that he sayeth not, We will visite him, and so depart againe, as many tymes we see friendes doe visite one another: but he sayeth, we will abide with him: which is as much to saye: We will holde our selues to him, and dwell continuallie with him, without euer departing from him.

By all these places, and many moze which might be rehearsed out of the scripture, it appeareth plainely that sayth being once giuen vs of God, it shall neuer be quite taken away from vs, and so by consequence neither the grace of God, which alwayes followeth it. And although it seeme oftentimes for dead, as it was in Dauid, when he committed so great and heinous sinnes one after another: yet for all that, there remayned alwayes in his harte, a certaine remnaunt of it, which for a time was hidde as fire is vnder the Ashes. And lyke as when it is raked vp it sheweth not his brightnes nor heate outwardly, vntill it be vnraked and kindled in a flambe: euen so, it oftentimes falleth

falleth out with our faith, which is hidden & couered with many vices, which the most holiest Sainctes of God them selues doe many times commit (euen as to fall into diseases) the which continueth, till it please God to stir vs up a new by his spirite, & to light vs againe, euen like as when a candle is put out. We must iudge the of our faith, as of a tree, which in winter seemeth to be dead, because it hath no fruite nor leaues nor any outwarde appearaunce of life: and yet notwithstanding it ceaseth not to liue, & sheweth that life, that was hid den within outwardly, in the spyng time, bynginge forth flowers and leaues, and taking againe his goodly bew: in so much as the sappe & strength which kept it selfe inclosed in the roote during the time of the colde, spreadeth it selfe throughout all the branches, to make them greene & fresh againe: Euen so likewise is it of Faith, which seemeth oftentimes to be quite dead in vs, when it bringeth not forth any sense or feeling neither of God, nor of his promises, nor of his commaundements or threateninges: And sheweth not it selfe by any other wonted effect. Notwithstanding this, it is aliue in vs, and the life of it hath his being in Iesus Christ in whom it is ingrafted & planted. And as the strength of this roote can neither be frosen nor dead: euen so neither

can the Faith of a Christian which is so deeply grounded within be altogether extinguished and dead being the roote of all immortalitye, from whence it fetcheth his life.

*Howe the
righteous-
nes of Je-
sus Christ
maye be
distributed
to all the
faithful.*

But before we ende this matter, it is needefull to consider one wonderfull thing, to witte, howe the righteousness of Christ, which is one onely, may be also entirely distributed to euery one of his members, without being deuided and sundred in any respect.

*A simili-
tude of the
soule.*

To aunswere this point, a man may say of it, as certaine Philosophers haue sayd of the soule of man, which is wholly throughtout y^e whole body, and in euery part a like: euen so is y^e righteousness of Iesus Christ, wholly in the body of the whole church, as the soule, to giue it life and to mainteine it. Then is it altogether, in euery of the particular members, to make the strong, whole, stout & of courage to doe all their offices and duties. The which thing a man may vnderstande by two similitudes, one is of the voice, which being hearde of a great many persons, is in such sort receaued of euery one of the, prouided that they be attētiue, that the same is wholly vnderstood, without being deuided or sundred in any respecte. The other similitude is of the face which may be receaued in many glasses, and wholly represented to al, without any diuision

*Simili-
tudes of
the voice
& the face.*

tion of separation of the same.

Let vs conclude then that a faithfull man through faith embraceth the whole righteousness and all the fruites of the sacrifice of Iesus Christ: and that, for this cause he can not be condemned or accursed before Gods iudgemēt, no more then his head with whome he is inseparably knitte & vnited. Whē any man is salne into the water where he is by euen to the chin, yet he cānot be hurt, as lōg as his head is aboue the water, although that all the members and partes of his body be drowned and foundred: so also we cannot be stifled or hurt in the deapthes of death, seeing that Iesus Christ our head, is alwayes lift vp aboue those deapths, & for that vpon the life and health of him dependes the health and saluation of all his members. *A similitude.*

Now it is time to shewe by what signes and markes we may knowe, whether we possesse Iesus Christ, and whether he dwell in vs and we in him. S. Paule sayeth to the Romans: that being iustified by Faith, we haue peace in our soules: which is an vndoubted token that Christ dwelleth in our hartes, that is to saye: when we feele there tranquillitie and rest, and that we beginne to bee peaceable in our consciences: tormentes, bytings, anguishes, terrorz and distrustes there ceasing: and when in

Howe we may knowe whether Iesus christ dwell in vs or no. Rom. 5. 1.

the stead of all these, there cometh in place, ioy,
pleasure, consolation, and as it were a common
feast where all reioyce. For then Iesus Christ
liueth in vs and we in him: to witte, when all
our thoughtes, our meditations, our woꝝkes
and our delightes, doe carrie vs to him, as to
the marke: And when we sette him out to our
selues, to be our onely glozie honour, riches,
treasure, and the grounde of all our hopes: and
that we holde him as our chiefe and soueraigne
good, that is to saye: when we neither knowe,
desire, or seeke after any other but him: and that
we are enlightened by his light and spirite, are
made wyle thꝛough his wisdom, and strong
thꝛough his strength, and riche thꝛough his
blessings, and righteous thꝛough his innocen-
cie, and blessed thꝛough his grace and sauour:
& when we will haue no other maister to teache
vs, noꝝ other light to leade vs, noꝝ other sight
to direct vs, noꝝ other trueth to deliuer vs, noꝝ
other life to quicken vs, noꝝ other king to go-
uerne and defende vs, noꝝ other mediatour to
reconcile vs, and make vs at one with God, noꝝ
other aduocate to pleade our cause in his iudge-
mēt, noꝝ other gate to enter in at to his kingdō,
noꝝ to make vs there reioyce of the perfect and
full felicitie, which he hath reserued & kept for
his elect. And in general, whē we neither seeke,
noꝝ

nor will haue other fountaine to quenche our thirst, nor to satisfie our desires. See then how Iesus Christ liueth in vs and we in him.

It is very true that y^e feeling which we haue of all these things, is not alwayes alike and the same in vs. Forasmuch as we are not alwayes alike disposed, at one time as at another: and we haue not alwayes a like desire to see or to heare the word of God, or to read it, or to cōferre with our brethren, which are more aduanced in the knowledge and zeale of the seruice of God then we are. And likewise the spirit of God doth not touch and stirre vs by alwayes a like. And this is the cause that in our faith, as in all other qualities, there is sometime more & sometime lesse; and that oftentimes it is more strong & liuely, & then sometimes againe more remisse & faint. For altogether like as we see y^e water is more hoat or cold, according as it is neare or farre from the fire: euen so is it with vs, according as we are more or lesse exercised in the word, & diuen by Gods spirit, we haue more or lesse zeale and affection. And altogether like as the disposition of the body followeth the quality and temperature of the aire, elements and exercises, to which we giue our selues: euen so according to the places where we liue, and the nourishment that we there take, is the estate of our soules &

The perplexities & doubts that are in the spirit all life of the faithfull.

A similitude.

consciencences. But be it that water be sometime hoate and sometime colde, and that it chaunge his qualities, sometimes one way, sometimes an other, yet is it alwayes water: euen so the man that is electe after his regeneration, is alwayes faithfull, howsoever in that he is the child of Adam, he be sometimes inclined to euil, and that his faith be not alwayes in one and the selfe same estate, and that he is not alwayes accompanied with the like zeale & affectiō. For oftentimes it commeth to passe that we feelee Iesus Christ to stirre and moue him selfe in vs, and by and by after, we haue no maner of feeling at all: but therefore he cealeth not to dwell in vs, no moze then our soules doe to dwell in our bodies whē we sleepe, although in sleeping we neither feelee thē, nor any of their operations. A woman who hath conceaued and beareth in her wombe a younge childe, feeleth it not alwayes stirre, notwithstanding when she hath felt it once or twice, she doubteth not but she is with childe: euen so it cometh to passe that we haue not a continuall feeling of Iesus Christ, to assure vs that he dwelleth in vs and we in him: but it suffizeth that we haue him when occasion serueth.

There are some also that feelee and taste in some sort the righteousnes of Iesus Christ: but on þ other side they haue a farre greater feeling of

of their finnes; which oftentimes maketh them to feare þ they are not in God his fauour. Concerning this poynt we must note, that we more feele that which is euill, thē that which is good. For as we see by experience, we feele the calamities & miseries of warre more thē the fruites & pleasures of peace, & the griefes of diseases, more then the quietnes of health, and the hardnes of pouerty, more then the pꝛofites and commodities of aboundance and riches: by reason whereof we ought not much to maruell, if we feele the stingings and pꝛickes of sinne a great deale more then þ cōsolations of the righteousness of Iesus Chꝛist: seeing þ sinne dwelleth in vs & not righteousness, which thing is in cause þ the one is more sensible then þ other: Notwithstanding for all this we must not thinke, þ sinne is greater & stronger then righteousness, oꝝ that it can in any respect be compared vnto it, oꝝ can be more able to condemne and destroy vs, then the righteousness of Iesus Chꝛist and the grace of God is, to iustifie and saue vs. We haue some times in the toppe of a finger, some paine oꝝ griefe, which we feele a great deale more then the health that is all ouer the rest of the bodie, yea though it bee muche greater then the paine of our finger. Wherefoꝛe we must not esteeme the greatnesse oꝝ the strength, whether it be of

A similitude.

righteousnes or sinne, according to that feeling we haue: because þ one is alwayes more sensible the the other: & specially forasmuch as we embrace righteousnesse onely by faith which is of those things that are not outward and sensible,

*A remedy
against the
tentation of
the continu-
all feelinge
of our sinne
onely.*

There are others also that feelee nothing else but their sinnes: and therefore they liue in continuall feare and distrust, where out they can not winde them selues, hauing no taste at all of the grace & righteousnesse of Iesus Christ, nor of any other meane, whereby it is graunted vnto vs. Which thing (of a trueth) is very daungerous: & they which feelee them selues in such case ought earnestly to pray vnto God, that it will please him to quicken them bp, & to warme them through his spirite. And on their part it beho- ueth that they giue them selues oftentimes to read & to meditate vpon his promises, and that they frequent the Church, & heare exhortations, with the greatest attencion they can, forasmuch as fayth is engendred by hearing. And although it came to passe þ they do all these things with- out any great affection, yet must they not there- fore thinke, that they are altogether vnprofitable vnto them, no more then a man that taketh breade and meate when he taketh and eateth it, without any great appetite. For although that he haue not such a pleasure in eating, as if he were

*A simili-
tude shew-
ing that we
must not be
discoura-
ged though
we find not
alwayes in*

were well an hungred : notwithstanding, that which he receaueth, ceaseth not to profit and susteine him, as we see in sicknesse : euen so doe prayers and other Christian exercises, to which such cold persons do giue them selues. And how soeuer they make thē without any great zeale, yet for all that they cease not to profite thē. And in euery thing that commeth to passe, howe soeuer it be that they fele their sinnes, they declare thereby that they are not altogether dead, nor vtterly depriued of life, and that therefore it only remaineth for thē to search the meanes howe to encourage them selues, and to doe euen as a man would do to fire, when it is out, which whē he will kindle againe, he bloweth it, or to a lampe to which a man putteth oyle when the light is going out.

There are other some which neither haue feeling of righteousness nor of their sinnes, and these are altogether blockish, not thinking any whit of their safety, nor regarding to harkē vnto any thing that is spoken, taught or shewed to them for their helpe & recouerie. Such diseases are very dangerous as are to mans body Apoplexies, the falling sickenes, Palsyes and such other which are altogether cold, killing the natural heate, & choking all the senses. All that we can doe for these, is to praye vnto God to heale

*our selues
that good
desire and
taste that
we ought
to haue, of
the worde
of God.*

*A remedie
against the
spirituall
blockishnes
or lacke of
feeling.*

*Apoplexia
is a disease
engendred
of cold hu-
mours, that
taketh a-
way*

a mannes
senses and
feeling.

thē, as he did the man sicke of the palsey, & that he will restore to them y^e vse of their senses, that they may feele as wel the burden and waight of their sinnes, as also the consolation of his grace.

The last
point is of
the effectes
of this righ-
teousnes in
vs after re-
generation
& that con-
taineth 4.
partes.

The last point, that we haue to intreate of is of the effectes, that this righteousness bringeth forth in vs after our regeneration: wherof there are foure principall partes.

1. The mor-
tification of
the flesh.

The first is of the mortification of the flesh. The second of the confessiō of Faith. The third of prayers; and the last of charitie.

Mortification of the flesh consisteth in this, that we suffer not sinne to reigne in vs; but courageously fight against all the concupiscences thereof, obeying the spirite of the lawe of God, and groning continuallie vnder the burden of our infirmities, crying to God without ceasing, that in this case he will make an ende, and provide for vs.

2. The con-
fession of
Faith.

Confession consisteth in this, that we publish the meanes of our saluation, and that we witnes it openly and evidently by our works & words, at all times when occasion is offered vnto vs; without being hindred through the feare of any daunger whatsoeuer.

3. Prayers.

As concerning prayers, it is necessary that euening and morning, before and after meate, and in the beginninge and endinge of all our workes

workes, we pray vnto God and praise him, begging that in our prayers which he hath commaunded vs to aske, and promised to giue vnto vs, with full Faith & assurance to obtaine them: which we must ground vpon his grace and promises, and vpon the merite and intercession of Iesus Christ our alone Mediatour.

As touching loue, first of all it is required *4. Charitie.* that we loue God with all our hearte, with all our strength, and with all our vnderstandinge, and then our neighbour as our selfe, the which loue of our neighbour & it may be right, it must be referred to that loue of God in such wise that it be the rule and measure thereof, and likewise of all other our affections.

Nowe in obseruing of these foure pointes, we must first take heede that we be not dull and slothfull to do our indeuour therein. The which thing that we may auoyde, we must seeke out with all diligence euery occasion to applie our selues thereto, and take heede to auoyde those thinges which maye turne vs awaye from it. Then afterwarde we must beware that in no wise we distrust the grace of God, nor the seruice that we offer by vnto him, but that we be certainly perswaded, that we together with our workes, shalbe acceptable vnto him, through grace, that hauing this perswasion we may goe

faithfully & chearefully forward in our vocatiō.

*We must
auoide pre-
sumptiō &
an opinion
of our sel-
ues.*

Psal. 131.

And finally, that we take good heede to our selues, that aboue al things we be not presumptuous. And to the ende to keepe vs from it, it is not enough, ꝑ we haue no opinion of our selues nor of our workes: but as it is wꝛitten in the psalme: we must not desire any thing that is to high for vs, but be content with that porcion & measure of grace, that it hath pleased God to bestowe vpon vs, and we must applie our selues according to that power and meane that he hath giuen vs: As S. Peter sayeth: Let euery man as he hath receaued the gift, minister the same one to an other as a good hus band and steward of the graces and giftes of God. For if we haue receaued but two talents, and will make as great traffique with thē, as he that hath receaued fīue, this is a presumption before God, who hath measured out and proportioned his giftes to our capacitie, and requireth of profites and gaines according to ꝑ quantitie of those graces and giftes which he hath bestowed vpon vs.

*The second
iudgement
where we
must an-
swere con-
cerning our
righteous-
nes.*

We haue sayde in the beginning that the second iudgement whereto we must answer concerning our righteousness, is that of the lawe, which is no other thing then the seate of Gods righteousness, to which it is impossible for vs of our selues to satisfie, and we haue neither workes,

wozkes,thoughts,wozds,noz affectiōs but they
 are to be condemned of God,if processe be made
 out there for vs, and we be to be iudged in this
 court:as S. Paule saith that all they which are *Gal.3.10.*
 vnder the law,are vnder the curse: & in an other *2.Cor.3.7.*
 place,he calleth the law the Minister of Death.
 And Dauid speaking to God sayth: Enter not *Psal.143.2.*
 into iudgement with thy seruant: For no man
 liuing shalbe iustified in thy sight: Also in an o-
 ther place he sayth: O Lord if thou looke vpon *Psal.130.3.*
 our iniquities, who shall stand in thy iudgemēt?
 Forasmuch as this iudgemēt is so entier, where
 all things are examined, in such sort, from point
 to point, that the brightnesse and light of the
 moone and starres, the righteousnes and inno-
 cencie of the Angells, shall hardly escape from
 being reiected and censured, as Job sayth. How *Iob.25.5.*
 then shall we be able to aunswere there, & what *Iob.4.18.*
 meanes shall we alleage for our iustificatiō, that
 we may escape? S. Paule saith, They that haue *Rom.2. 12.*
 sinned without the lawe, shal perish without the
 lawe. But seeing that they shall be condemned
 by the law, who haue transgressed it: what shall
 we do then? we can aunswere and alleage many
 thinges for our defence.

First we can auoyde this iudgement and
 ridde our selues from it demaunding to be sent
 befoze the thzone of Gods mercie: forasmuche

*The waye
 howe to be
 deliuered
 from the*

*iudgement
and male-
diction of
the lawe.*

Gala. 4. 7.

John. 5. 22.

James. 1. 13

as being free and deliuered, we are not any longer vnder the law, but vnder grace : so as Moyses is not nowe any more our Iudge but Iesus Christ : to whom the father hath giuen auctoritie and iudgement. Moreouer mercie (as S. James sayth) is aboue righteousness : which is as an inferiour & lower courte, from which we may appeale to that high & great court of God his mercie : wherein Iesus Christ is set downe and keepeth y^e highest place as chiefe president. And as it is he that is our aduocate, so we are assured that he wil giue vs a discharge in our fauour. Wherefore if the law, Moyses & the righteousness of God doe condemne vs, we must not therefore be afraid : forasmuch as this is such a simple sentence, as we maye at all times appeale from it. To conclude, the law is as a receauer, which taketh accompt of our debtes, which is so hard & rigorous, that by no intreatie it wil remit and pardon any thing of that we owe, and will make vs to paie to the uttermost farthing : But the Lorde is he that stayeth and closeth vp the count, to wit Iesus Christ, being (contrary to the lawe) good, gracious and liberal, entreating vs with all gentlenes, neither demaunding any thing of vs but that which we be able to paie, and furnishing vs him selfe with that which we lacke, & acquiting vs of his mere
liberalitie

liberalitie of the ouerplus, so that presently it may be supplied in him.

Furthermoze wee maye yet alleage in this iudgement, that the lawe can not make our processe: but Iesus Christ, and the mercie of God be our assesseurs, who moderate iudgement in such sort, that not onely it can not bee hurtfull vnto vs, but very healthfull for vs. As the iudgement of the woman taken in adulterie, the figure thereof: who being threatened before Iesus Christ, by the Pharisees, who maintayned that by the lawe of Moyses she ought to be stoned to death, was notwithstanding all that they coulde alleage, sent away by Iesus Christ, without her accusers, or any others that were in their companie, once interprising to hurt her in any sorte what so euer: Onely Iesus Christ sayeth vnto her, that hence forwarde she must take heede that she sinned no more: and so that condemnation which the ministers of the lawe had pronounced against her, was by Christ, turned into a simple admonition and instruction. A thing that ought well to be marked, to the ende we may vnderstande what ought now a dayes to bee the true vse of the lawe towards the faithfull: which condemneth them no more to death as it was wont, but teacheth and instructeth them of their dutie, ex-

Iohn. 8. 3.

An allegorie of our exemption from the iudgement of the lawe by Iesus Christ.

The vse of the law towards the faithfull.

horteth them to that, and reproveth, and procureth, by all meanes so to directe, and bring them on, as they may bee sufficiently enabled to goe to the schoole of Iesus Christ.

A comparison & difference of the law and the Gospel.

The lawe and Iesus Christ in like manner are as a Physicion and Surgeon, comming to a sicke man to heale him. The surgeo openeth the veine, and taketh away bloud from him, not to the end to make him to die, but as a remedy, a ppointed for the recouery of his health & sauetie. The law also pearceth our impostume, & sometimes maketh a great hole in it: but neither to the ende to kil vs, nor to hurt vs: but to bring vs into a good order, to the end we may be y more easely healed. Those sentences the, that the law pronounceth against vs, they are profitable for vs, for as much as they awaken vs and make vs to looke to our selues and to our affaires, and to be more diligent to search out y meanes whereby to bring vs into good order.

The thirde meane, or defence against the iudgement of the law.
Mat. 5. 17.
Rom. 10. 4.

The last bulwarke that we canne set against the iudgement of the lawe, is that Iesus Christ hath fulfilled the same for vs, as he him selfe witnesseth: that he came not to abolish the law, but to fulfil it. Which thing S. Paule also confirmeth saying: that Christ is the accomplishment of the lawe in righteousness to all beleeuers. Wherefore we be not, in any wise subiect

to

to death, nor to the curse, that the lawe hath pronounced against them, that haue transgressed it, seeing wee are the members of Iesus Christ, and that we haue kept and fulfilled it in him. And as in Adam we were made sinners through disobedience: euen so being incorporated into Iesus Christ, wee are righteous through his obedience: and so consequently exempte from the iurisdiction and power of the lawe: which can not exercise the auctoritie it hath to condemne vs, but against thē that transgresse and are rebellious against it. Wherefore we endeour our selues, to doe our dutie, to mortifie through his spirite the workes of the flesh, there is not any condemnation to vs, nor to all them that are in Iesus Christ, who are by a liuely fayth vnited to him, ingrafted and incorporated into his righteousness. *Rom. 8. 1.*

The third kinde of iudgement whereof wee spake in the beginning of our diuision is the iudgement of men: which commonly is more corrupt and vniuste, by reason of their ignorance & false opinions, which they conceaue & frame in their owne vnderstanding: and likewise because of their passions and desires, which often times diue and carry them hedlong contrary to their will. Wherefore we must not trouble our selues much to satisfie that, especially in

The third iudgement against vs, to witte, the iudgement of men, and of the remedies of the same.

matters that appertaine to religion and conscience. As in the doctrine of saluation, which we must not take from any other, but from the spirite of God, nor search for any where else but in the lawe and the Gospell: where all is taught by the writings of the Prophetes and Apostles. Wherefore there is no other rule of our Faith and obedience, but the onely will of God, that is to saye, we ought not to beleue any thing, as concerning our saluation, but that which he hath promised in his holy Gospell, nor doe any thing for his seruice, but that which he hath commaunded and ordeyned in his lawe. And when so euer it be found, that men will be so rashe either to adde, or to diminish, or to alter any thing in the worde of God, there a man maye iudge, and surely perswade him selfe of suche, that they are false teachers and Prophetes: and so likewise of them that beleue & submit them selues vnto such by whom they are abused and deceaued. This is the reason why S. Paule sayeth, that if he woulde please men, he shoulde not be the seruaunt of Iesus Christ. And in an other place: If an Angell from heauen shoulde teache any other Gospell then that Iesus Christ and his Apostles haue published, that he woulde accompt him accursed. It is therefore needefull to be taught

*Our faith
must not
depend vpon
others.*

Gal. 1. 8. 10

taught that in these thinges, belonging to þ^e honour & seruice of God, and to the saluation and rest of our soules, we rest our selues altogether vpon the scripture, and thereto bende our selues as to the onely marke, that we neither haste too much forwarde, nor lagge to much behinde. And further that we hang not vpon the iudgement of men, as whereby we maye either be iustified or condemned.

Sainct Paule wryting to the Corinthians 1. Cor. 4. 3.
sayeth: I passe litle to be iudged of you, or of 4. &c.
the iudgement of men, no I iudge not my owne selfe: forasmuch as I knowe my selfe not to be culpable in any thing, yet am I not thereby iustified: but he that iudgeth me is the Lorde. Therefore iudge not before the time, before the Lorde come, who will bring all thinges to light, manifesting the thinges that are hidde, and all the counsailes and affections of the harte: the shall euery one be praised of God. Hereby he would teach vs not much to esteeme the iudgement of men be it in good or euill, because they are vaine of their owne nature, and if they praise vs, this ought not to puffle vs vp, or to encrease the opiniõ we haue of our selues. Also if they dispraise or condemne vs we ought not therein to discourage our selues hauing the spirite of God, his worde and our owne con-

science, to susteine and iustifie vs.

We are at this day excommunicated of the Pope, and condemned and reiected from his presence and of the most part of men: and principally of them, who are in greatest estimation and credit of knowledge and wisdom, notwithstanding concerning the Pope, we ought to make no reckoning of him nor of al^l his sentences that he can pronounce and thunder out against vs. For hee is the enemy of Iesus Christ, and consequently Antichrist: and an enemy of the light, forasmuch as all his workes are euil: and of the trueth, being the first Embassadour and minister of lying: and to conclude, an vtter enemy to the saluation of men, and of the honour of God. Also he is the sonne of perdition, to cast awaye and to destroye all those, which will depende on his aucthoritie, and wilbe brought to his opinion touching the estate and saluation of their conscience. Is not this he which beareth the name of blasphemie vpon his forehead, to shewe that he would be the protectour? It is not therefore to be maruailed at, if he condemne and holde those for heretiques, which loue the honour of God, and employ them selues to aduance the kingdome of Iesus Christ.

Apoc. 13. 1.

As concerning the great and wise men of this world we ought not also to discourage our selues,

selues, if they sette them selues with all their
 strength against the truth, wherof they haue no
 knowledge as Iesus Christ sayeth: that his *Mat. 11. 25*
 father hath hidde from the great and wise of
 the worlde, the misteries of the kingdome of
 heauen, and hath reueiled them to litle ones.
 According to which S. Paule sayeth: that he *1. Cor. 1. 23.*
 preached Iesus Christ crucified, which was
 an offence to the Iewes, and foolishnesse to the
 Grecians: alleaging that which is witten in
 Esay: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, *Isay. 29. 14.*
 and will caste awaye the vnderstanding of the
 prudente. And adioynning that same question.
 Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where
 is the disputer of this worlde? Hath not God
 made the wisdom of this worlde foolishnesse?
 Ieremy sayeth also, seeing the people to make *Iere. 5. 5.*
 no accompt of his worde: I will get me vnto
 the great men, and will speake vnto them. For
 they haue knowen the way of the Lorde, which
 the people knewe not. But these also haue bro-
 ken the yoke, and haue banded them selues to-
 gether to speake against the worde of God, as
 the others. All these places serue to shewe vnto
 vs, that God hath chosen the foolish things
 of the worlde, to confounde the wise. And hereof
 it is, that we see nowe a dayes that the greatest
 men and they that are of most reputation in the

worlde, doe most obstinately resist the trueth: and shewe by worde and effectes, that they are most blind in God his matters, taking darkenes for light, sower for sweete, and sweete for sower.

Now as the greatnes and aucthority of men ought not to astonishe vs, nor any whit to moue vs, so also, neither the number and multitude of
Mat. 7. 13. them. Forasmuch as the way that leadeth to destruction is bzoade, and is chosen of the greatest number of persons who enter there, and goe on in it because that men are naturally enclined to embrace errorrs and lyes, and there is none but the elect of God, which beleue & loue y^e trueth: who are a litle number (as Iesus Ch^rist sayth) in respect of the reprobate.

We conclude then, that to the end we be righteous it is not needeful that we satisfie men, nor conforme our selues to their iudgement, in matters that concerne the honour and seruice of almighty God, and the estate of the conscience: wherin oftentimes they erre, because they leaue the word of God which is the only way where by a man may well and rightly iudge and define of these two poyntes, and betake them selues to the iudgement and definition of their owne opinions and phantasies, which are for the most part sonde and ridiculous.

There are two thinges in which we may apply

plie our selues to mā's iudgement, that is to say, *Of the vs*
 to thinges meere cyuill and politique, and to *of ciuill and*
 things indifferēt. For it must not be that a faith- *politique*
 full man be partiall in policie, neither that hee *thinges.*
 violate the publique peace, as long as he may
 keepe and maintaine it without offence to God,
 or trouble to the quiet of his conscience. But it
 behoueth that he obeye the ordinaunces of the
 Magistrate, and keepe the statutes, lawes & cu-
 stomes of the countrey where he dwelleth, care-
 fully watching that he giue no occasion of of-
 fence, nor suspicion that he will innouate or al-
 ter any thing in the estate & policy of the com-
 mon wealth.

As concerning things indifferent, we must *Of the vs*
 follow the counsel of S. Augustine writing to *of thinges*
 Ianuarius: that when the thing that is con- *indifferent*
 maunded of men is not contrarie to Faith, nor *S. Augustin*
 to good customes, we must hold them for indis-
 ferent, & not gaine stande in any thing whatsoe-
 uer: to the ende to keepe peace with those with
 whom we are cōuersant. For which cause Vi-
 ctor Bishop of Rome, was sharply repproued by
 Ireneus & other auncient fathers: because that
 for the diuersity of ceremonies, which they kept
 in the celebration of Easter, he hadde separated
 his Church from the Communion of the East
 churches. The which thing was attributed vn-

to him for great presumption and arrogancie, that he would go about to subiect all Churches to the Customes and ceremonies which were obserued in his: and for hauing renounced the common confederation, in which he ought to haue abidden vnited and fast knitte, and not to haue broken the chaine of charity, which ought to haue locked together alike all the members of the vniuersall Church.

*The fourth
and last
iudgement,
which is
that of the
conscience.*

*A good con-
science is a
paradise in
this world.*

*A simili-
tude.*

*A euill
conscience
is hell.*

The last iudgement to which we must answer, is that of our conscience, which either ministreth vnto vs great consolations, or else great torments, according as it is either euill or wel disposed. For we may saye that a pure conscience, is a paradise which we maye haue in this worlde: forasmuch as there is not any thing which can bring vs greater peace & contentment, bee it in prosperitie or in aduersitie. Euen like as y body when it is in good health, is strong and able to beare the great stormes & colde of winter, and likewise the excessive and vntemperate heat of the sommer: euen so a conscience that is whole, & fully resolved, can beare stoutly all accidents, without yelding or shrinking vnder the burden and waight of any thing whatsoeuer may happen vnto it. Contrariwise an euill and sicke conscience is a very hell, and there is nothing in y worlde that may more bere
and

and tozment vs. And as a good conscience is as suger to sweeten and mollifie al our affections: euen so y other is as sharpe vinegre, which sowreth & troubleth all our ioyes and consolations: And mozeouer as the one is sufficient to resiste al tentations: euen so the other is soft, cowardly & vanquished as soone as it is assailed. It is necessarie therefore that as we are curious in looking to the health of our bodie, obseruing for that purpose, the diete and gouernment that is deliuered & appointed by the phisition vnto vs, & contrariwise abstaining from all those meats, & excelle which may offende & alter our health: euen so that we haue the same desire and care to preserve that health for our soules, marking diligently all the rules and ordinaunces of good life, which God the most high and soueraigne phisition hath appointed vs, and taking heede on the other side, to auoyde & shunne that which he hath prohibited and forbidden vs.

Let vs consider a litle, what great pleasure and ioye a man may haue, who returning home after a long iozney into his owne house, findeth there his wife, who comineth to take him about the necke, and embzaceh him, kissing and making much of him: doth not this make him by and by to forgette all his trauell which he hath endured in his iozney? As contrarywise, if he

should find his wife after his returne brawling, riotous, froward, and who instead of comforting him, would all manner of wayes bere & torment him, would not this encrease and double his paines and torments which he hath suffered by the way? Euen such is y^e estate of the conscience. Although that our enemies commit a thousand outrages, violencies & villanies against vs: If we returning from our selues, and entring into our own conscience, find there one with a cheerful & merrie countenance, which doeth comfort & content vs, it maketh vs in a moment to forget all our enemies. But on the other side, if it be naught, it wearieth vs in such sort, that we shal not find any house worse then our owne, nor any place where we may worse quiet our selues, then with our selues. I say sayeth: that an euill conscience is as a streight bed, in which a man can not stretch him selfe, nor turne him selfe at pleasure. It is an hard thing for a man there to sleepe well and to rest quietly: Likewise a man which hath a festered conscience, he can not finde any place or condition to content him, & which is not altogether too streight for him: This is the cause y^e Dauid so often prayeth to God that he will let his imprisoned hart at large, that is to say, that he wil shew him this fauour, that he may alwaies haue a sound & byright conscience.

Nowe

Isai. 28. 20

A fine similitude.

Psal. 4. 2.

Nowe to the end we may haue such a conscience, it behoueth that it be wel founded: & that it may be wel founded, it is requisite that y^e only woꝝd of God be the foundation thereof: so as we make no conscience, but to doe those things that God hath forbidden, and to leaue vndone those things that he hath commaunded. Forasmuch as he that wil stretch out his conscience beyond this, knoweth not how to saue himselfe, but that ranging beyond the boundes of Gods woꝝd, he must haue infinit scruples, which shal vex him continually. And to be short, there is nothing in the woꝝld moꝝe pernicious, noꝝ moꝝe to be feared, then to confound the conscience about such imaginations, oꝝ about the commaundements and traditions of men.

But here must be noted that the conscience & the peace of conscience are things diuers, & that they haue diuers foundations. For the conscience (as hath bin already declared) is ruled by the law, that is to say, by the commaundements, & forbiddings of God. But y^e peace of conscience hath foꝝ his foundation the Gospel, y^e promises, the grace of Iesus Christ & his righteousness. And as there is no other meane to answer to y^e iudgement of God, but y^e righteousness & innocēcy of Iesus Christ: euē so is it he alone which can stand vs in sted to satisfie y^e iudgement of our

*The way to
haue a good
conscience*

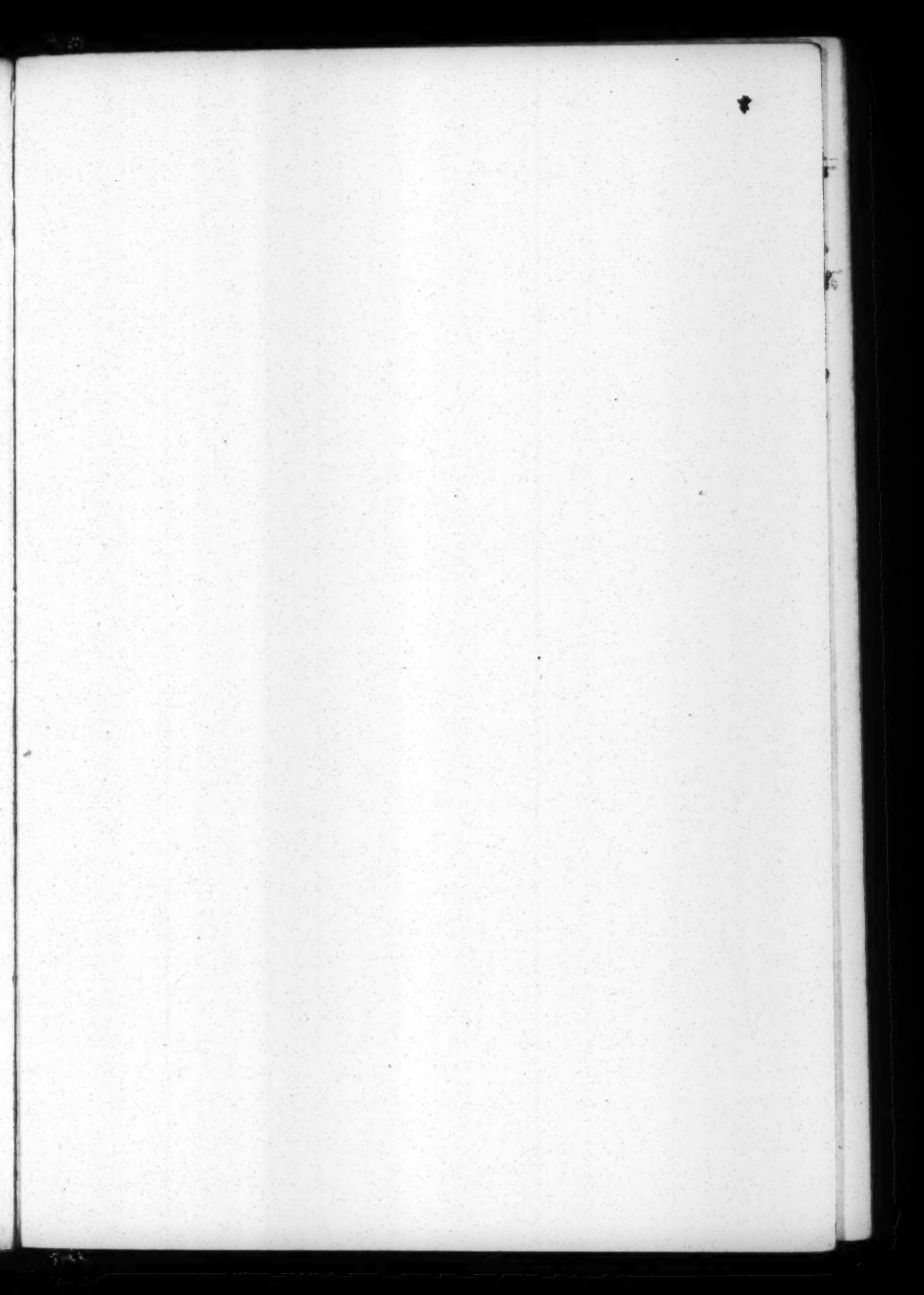
*A difference
betwixt the
conscience
and the
peace of
conscience.*

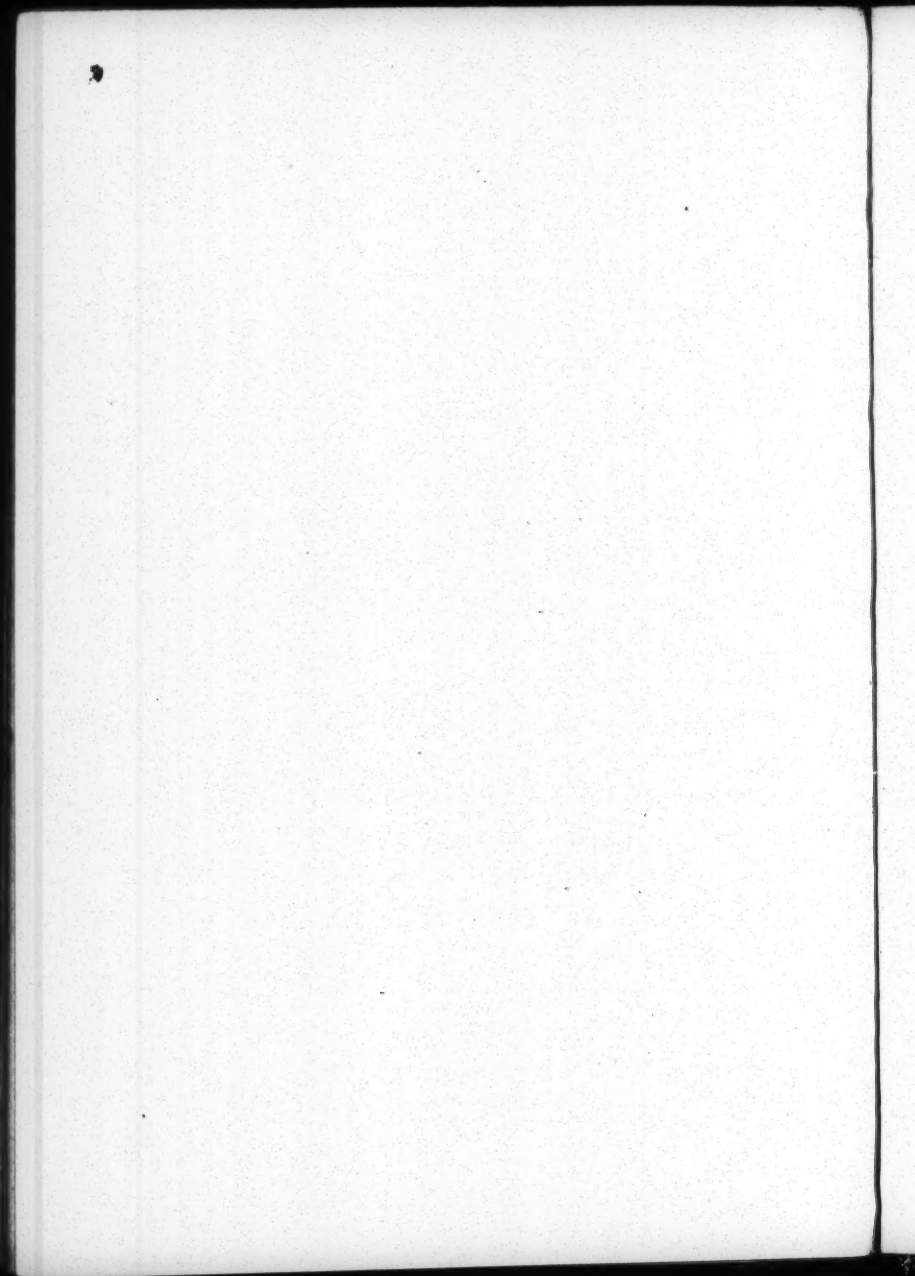
*Iesus Christ
onely hath
satisfied the
iudgements
of our con-
science.*

1. Cor. 4. 4.

consciencs. For if we looke vnto our woꝝkes we haue our consciences straight way vexed & disquieted with feare and distrust of not hauing done our duty, in not obaying God, noꝝ keeping of his commaundements, as we were bounde: which was the cause that S. Paule sayde, that he felt him selfe not culpable of any thing, but yet for this, he thought him selfe not iustified: to giue vs to vnderstande: that there is nothing that can pacifie our cōscience, but the only righteousness of Iesus Christ, & not our own, which is alwayes imperfect and defiled w many filths of our concupiscence, & by reason hereof can not content our hearte, noꝝ make vs to take any pleasure in many of those thinges we haue done oꝝ left vndone: but the blood, woundes & death, and the side of Iesus Christ opened (as S. Bernard sayeth) is that, which pacifieth the conscience, whē as it would thus toꝝment & persecute vs: Beholde the freedome and refuge we haue, where wee maye retire to safetie. To conclude then and here to make an ende of this treatise, the righteousness of Iesus Christ, is the onely meane, whereby we are iustified before the iudgement of God, of the law, of men, and of the conscience.

FINIS.





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Perfect

Some additional work into

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